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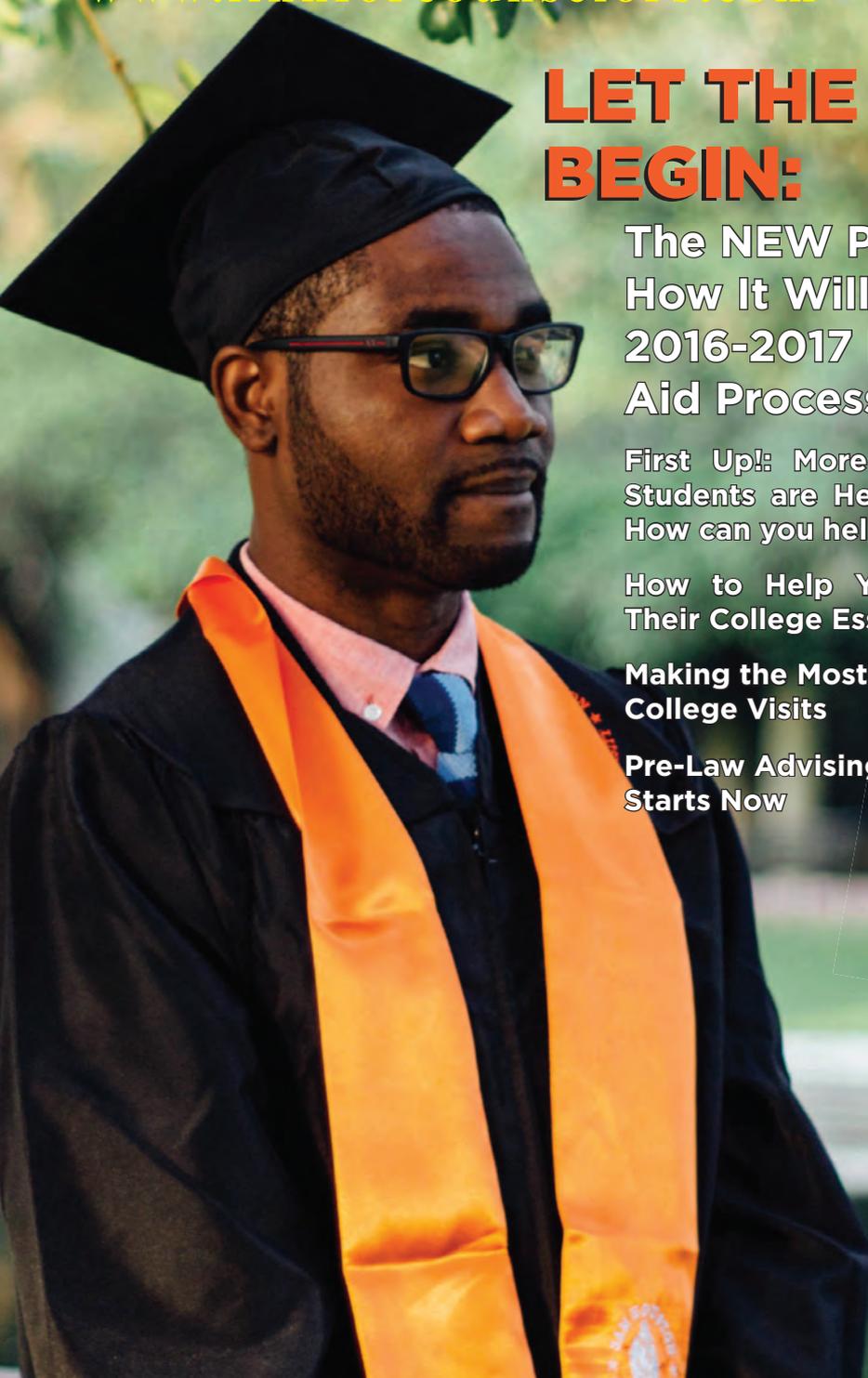
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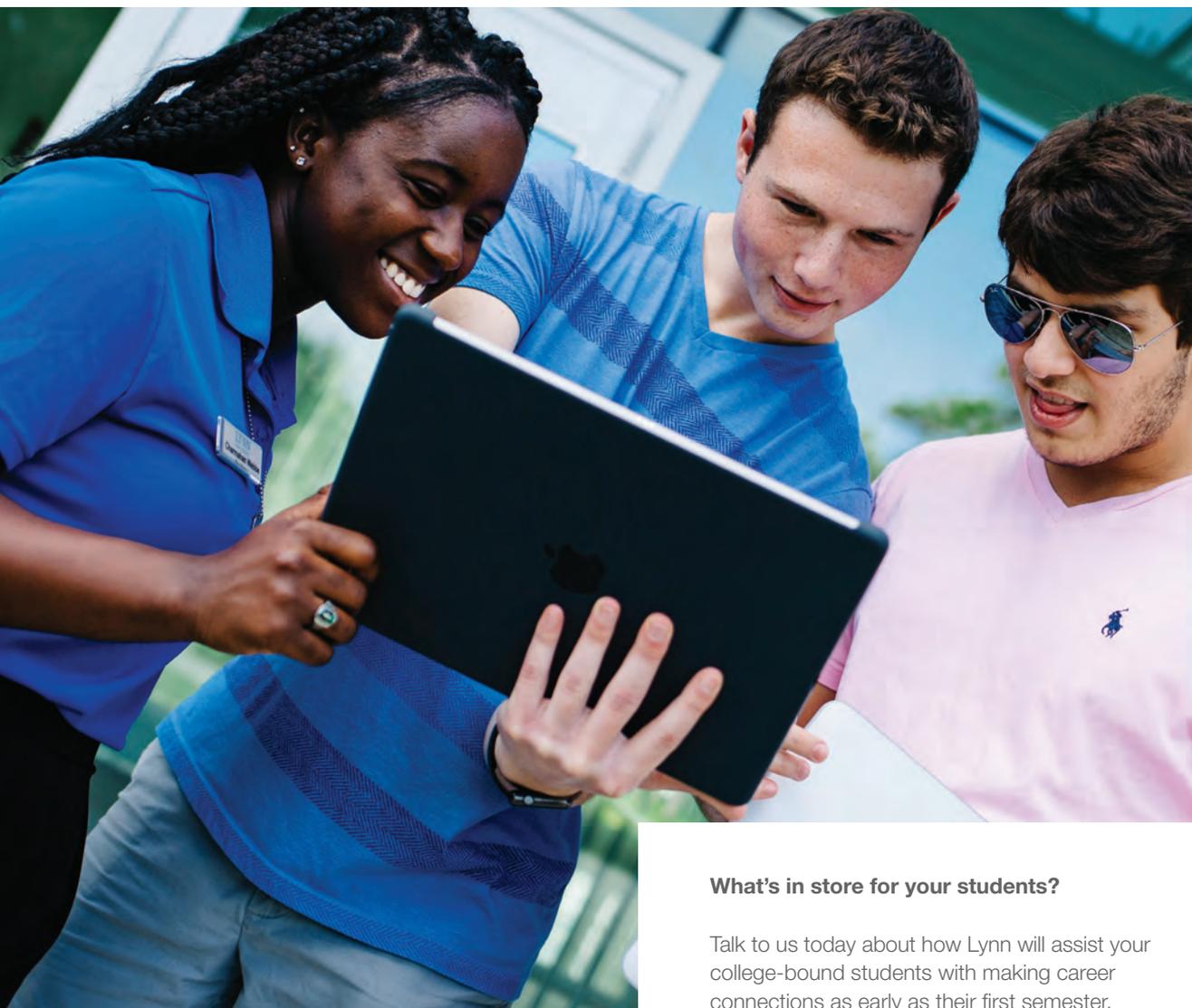
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Dear Counselors

If you are reading this issue you took the time to sign up for a free subscription to LINK for Counselors (or someone was nice enough to share their copy with you). For that I thank you! We provide the magazine free in print to 25,000 High School Counselors throughout the country and this

issue also includes a special Transfer Section which is distributed to an additional 1,500 Counselors that work with Transfer Students. We also send it out digitally to an additional 19,000 Counselors. With pass along, more than 100,000 Counselors will peruse this issue of LINK for Counselors.

Our goal is to provide you with content that helps you learn how other Counselors and related professionals are working with students to help them take their next steps in life. Last year we surveyed you to find out which topics would be of most interest in 2016/2017. We came up with a nice slate of articles covering a variety of subjects based on that feedback.

Articles covering the new SAT, the new PreACT, the revised PPY FAFSA rules, rewarding Careers outside the mainstream for your students to consider, working with first-generation students, helping your students land a dream internship and much more are included in this issue. The table of contents on pages 6-7 has the complete line-up for you.

How can you contribute in the future? Do you have some knowledge you would like to share with your peers? Are there programs in your school that are helping students that can be expanded to other schools around the country? We offer you a platform to share your voice with a larger audience than any other platform available targeting Counselors.

If you have something to share please let us know. We are currently looking for content for our Spring 2017 issue. We also always welcome any feedback you might have about LINK for Counselors. We have received some great comments from Counselors in the past (see page 84 for a sampling) and always welcome your feedback, whatever it may be.

Thanks again and look for our next issue in February 2017. If you received this issue second hand you can sign up to ensure you get a copy of future issues at www.linkforcounselors.com.

Sincerely,

Jason Bullock, CBC
Publisher, LINK for Counselors
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LET THE GAMES BEGIN!

The NEW PPY and How It Will Affect Your 2016-2017 Financial Aid Process

By Patricia Finer, M. Ed



Many will agree that one of the most important investments an American can make for their child's future is that of an education. In 2015, the Obama Administration designed a plan for families to apply for Financial Aid earlier—in an effort to improve the college choices for students, as well as help pay for it. His goal was to simplify the process in hopes of attracting more students to apply for college, while also encouraging low-income and first-generation students to consider applying to college.

This October 1st, just after the college application season gets underway, the new PPY financial aid process will begin. This new process will be unveiled with the filing of the new free FAFSA online. This commencement will be a doubly important two-year process in the 2016-2017 year during the transition to this new program.

Traditionally, the base year for financial aid has always begun Jan. 1st of each junior year in high school, but this is changing. In the 2016-2017 and 2017-2018 school years, the base year will be two years, and in both years the 2015 income taxes will be used as a benchmark from which to evaluate the family's income.

So what does this change mean for a family? Well, while the mechanics will be straightforward, the implications will not be. To begin with, most college consultants like to start working with a family in 9th or 10th grade to position the student, but now they are looking at beginning in 8th grade, to position the family.

Why? Well for starters, a family's finances will matter starting in the sophomore year of high

school. Knowing your finances will become critical, because things like a grandparent's contribution, a 529 plan, trust accounts, or money in a child's name can produce heavy consequences. Second, the first year of college will be based on the first base year, which will be the 2nd half of 10th grade and the first half of 11th grade.

The last base year will be based on the second half of the freshman year, and the first half of the sophomore year of college. The good part is that a family's finances won't matter by the second half of the sophomore year in college, even if the child will not be done by the end of the fourth year. Positioning families early on will become more important in order to have a successful college matriculation.

It also means you can be done with all the applications by the start of the winter holidays. Instead of families waiting to get their W-2 or 1099s, the new FAFSA will automatically retrieve the prior year's tax return, and apply it to the applications to allow colleges to award aid sooner. Families can then enjoy the holidays a little more.

The goal of this new program is to give families a clearer view of what their true out-of-pocket expenses will be so they can plan ahead. While this may sound good, it does have some pitfalls. The first is that the Perkins provision will be done away with. We are thinking that perhaps there will be an increase given to the Pell Grants, and Pell Grants as we know them are adjustable based on a student's GPA.

Opening up the financial aid process three months

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earlier will also help students whose families are economically challenged to apply and enroll in colleges, adding thousands of students to college campuses, and in turn, hopefully reducing the burden to colleges and universities around the country. It is being anticipated that the program will cause middle-class families to pay an additional \$5,391 or more over a four-year period. While this program will help those economically disadvantaged students, it will be the middle class that bears the burden of the costs.

An example of this will be if a student selects a school for which the cost to attend (including room and board) is \$70,000. If the Cost Of Attendance (COA) is \$70,000 and the Estimated Family Contribution (EFC) is \$15,000, less any resources, that will leave a family or student with an adjusted need of \$55,000 required to attend a school.

One of the other changes to this new plan is that colleges and universities will be unable to learn which other schools are talking to a student. This may cause them to rev up their admissions process to an earlier date, as well as marketing more aggressively in fear of losing students due to information being given out, that will steer students away that they want to attract to their school.

According to Kevin Crockett, President of Noel-Levitz—an enrollment consulting firm—who has advised over 250 colleges on developing strategies and tactics to attract new students and the financial aid process, “We’re seeing colleges and universities dial in their financial aid offers in March and April with a certain segment of their target population.” Up until now, this has been a common and current tactic. The new PPY program may alter this approach for not only next year, but the years to come.

For students and families, the FAFSA will be an online process that evaluates a student’s need based on some new criteria. What the FAFSA will ignore are the following considerations: retirement accounts and annuities, life insurance cash value, family owned businesses with less than 100 workers, home equity values, and income from a non-custodial parent. They will count the family members—even if they live elsewhere—a child’s assets, taxable and trust accounts, and college accounts.

However, the criteria will be different when a student and/or family go to fill out their CCS Profile.

This is because need-based grants are available at approximately 229 colleges and universities, with most of them being private institutions where the CCS plays an important role.

There will be many new questions that might shock you on the CCS Profile this coming year. Some examples include: What kind of car does your family drive, year and model? Are you a beneficiary of a trust? Does anyone receive food and lodging as a work benefit? They will also take into consideration how many students (including parents) will be in college at one time. The profile will also request students to list their first-, second- and third-choice schools. The profile will look at trust accounts, home equity, divorce decrees and other considerations. However, not all family investments are counted in the CCS Profile. The profile assesses a family’s assets at only 5%, and a student’s assets at 100%.

If you have a custodial account and aid is a possibility, the family should consider moving UGMA/UTMA money to a custodial 529 account if applying to FAFSA schools, or PROFILE schools that treat these accounts as parent assets. How you title an account will be important.

Grandparents love to help and take pride in the process, but as much as they want to help, their assets should be put on hold at the start. Why? Grandparents need to avoid jeopardizing any of the need-based aid. If they want to help, their assistance should only begin after the second-to-last financial aid form has been filed. Remember to keep all capital gains to a minimum as they will be counted as income for the year.

If the child has sizable assets, spend that money first before the colleges do. A student can use their assets to pay for such things as a car, test prep preparation, tutoring, camps, a computer, and/or a private high school. You will also want to inquire whether you need to submit financial aid documentation for merit awards. These are the awards given for outstanding performance and are not based on need. If you have children close in age, have the older child consider taking a gap year to prolong how many children are in college at one time.

But what if the new PPY does not fit your current financial status? What if a parent has lost a job and is not working? Or a trust has been improperly managed and is insolvent? Is the family or student going to be left to a disadvantage? Well, colleges and universities are asking themselves these questions

today, and wondering if the new simplified plan is going to be that simple. The question many schools are asking is will the admissions process or financial aid come first?

For families, especially those in the middle class, it will mean needing to be savvy in understanding the awards they receive. They will have to look carefully and interpret the hidden messages awards can offer, to determine whether an award to their student is really good, or just camouflaged to look good—perhaps leaving them in debt.

How do you know? What should you do? What are students and families to do if they are confused by the process?

It might be easy for a family to quickly cave in when they look at this process and convince their child to go to a community college first to save money, but with the new PPY there will now be a caveat to this. If a student chooses to attend a community college, it will all be good until they transfer. At that point the free financial aid assistance a student will receive to complete the junior and senior year will be almost all gone (and in California that can take anywhere from 3-4 years to graduate from a 4-year institution), and after matriculation from the two to three years at a community college, will be reduced. In other words, choosing a community college will hurt your chances of receiving financial aid.

As a professional college and educational consultant, my recommendation is always the same: start with the fit. When the fit is right, everything else quickly falls into place.

The most important consideration for a student should be if the school they are looking at “fits” them. Does the school have the academic program they are looking for? Does it offer the type of on-campus experiences that will enrich them? What about the school’s environment? How do they feel about the campus design? Are there enough trees? Is it near water? Will there be snowstorms? There are a lot of considerations. Finally, does the school fit the family budget? Are there opportunities the student could get to help make this more affordable? Do not base the selection of a school on how much its retail costs are! Everything shakes out at the end of the day.

Finally, be strategic when filling out your forms! You must report the value of your assets as of the day you file for financial aid. Consider filing after you’ve paid your bills, or on a day the stock market is down, and

print out your account statements, as proof of the balances on the day you file for financial aid. If your child is older than 24, consider having them apply as an independent student, look at higher education tax credits, and pick the right school.

If you want to get an idea of how much your EFC will be, look at the Use EFC Calculator on the College Board’s website. Do not rely on other calculators, even if they are offered by financial aid specialists. This is the best one we have found.

The 2016-2017 school year will be very interesting to evaluate as the first year of this new PPY program rolls out, especially how these questions will impact the admissions offers and financial aid awards, since colleges and universities will not be privy to the same information they have had in years past.

Today, there are over 1,000 professional college consultants country-wide who have been educated and trained to assist families in interpreting and evaluating financial aid awards. There are many more without the training, but we are not talking about them.

These college professionals are available to assist you in looking to match a student with a school, based on academic, emotional, environmental and financial matches that will save you thousands of dollars in costly mistakes. They can also assist you with the review, interpretation and appeals of your financial aid awards to make sure you maximize your FREE financial aid resources.

Ms. Finer is an independent college consultant located in both Malibu and Santa Monica, California. This native second-generation Angeleno is a graduate of the University of Southern California (USC); the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA); Widener University (M.Ed), and matriculated from UCLA’s College Admissions Counseling program with distinguished honors.

*She currently sits on the Santa Monica-Malibu School District’s Visual and Performing Arts Advisory Board where she continues to assist in building programs for the world-renowned K-12 program in the arts, as well as being an Area Rep of the Silicon Beach Chapter of the Higher Educational Consultant Association (HECA), and the author of the award-winning book *The Applica-Phobia of College Admissions: Why “Getting In” Starts With Your Resume*, Xlibris, 2007. She is available to assist families throughout the admissions and financial aid process.*



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Making the Most of College Visits

By Penny Deck, M.Ed., CEP



The college search process can be overwhelming. Deciding where to spend your college years is an important decision and one your students should not take lightly. Careful research is required and there are many factors to consider. The best way to size up an institution and determine fit is by visiting the campus.

Documenting your students' visits is vital so that they will remember what they saw, who they met, and what they liked and did not like about each campus. If they leave this to memory, they will likely forget important things about each visit and be unable to recall things later. In addition, if they are visiting several colleges during a short period of time, e.g., during spring break, the colleges all start to run together and they soon forget which school had those great athletic facilities, which school was it where they met that incredibly engaging professor, or which school has the test optional policy?

It is also important to remember that this is their opportunity to demonstrate interest in the school, an important admissions consideration at some schools. If they do not "show the love" by demonstrating that they are invested in this process and that they are interested in learning as much as they can about the institution, then they are already putting themselves at a disadvantage. This is an excellent opportunity to market themselves to the college and they have one shot while on campus to do this.

College is expensive. Your student should be a savvy consumer; would they buy a car without

doing research first, test-driving it, and getting all of their questions answered? They and their parents are making a huge financial and emotional investment in this process, so they should be a careful and discriminating buyer.

Planning Their Visit

Make sure they adequately research and plan each visit. Visit the college website to determine when the school holds its information sessions and tours. Find out if they need to register in advance or whether they may just show up for a regularly scheduled presentation. Large universities usually do not require signing up in advance and most post their schedules on their website to enable students to pick the most convenient day and time for their visit.

Many school websites have on their admissions page, the name and contact information of the regional admissions counselor for each area, so your student should make note of that in advance. If the local admission representative has already visited your high school, make sure your student makes a note of his/her name so that they can touch base with him/her when they are on campus.

It's a good idea to have your student call the Admission office and find out if they can sit in on a class and/or tour a specific facility that might be off the normal tour, such as an engineering lab or the performing arts center.

If they are pursuing a major that requires an audition, e.g., the performing arts, they will want to schedule their visit around this timeframe

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so that they have plenty of time to do what is required, as well as see everything they want to see.

You can also provide your students with names and contact information of alumni from your high school that attend the college(s) they are planning to visit. Many other high schools have an alumni listing by college, with emails and contact information for just this purpose.

When to Visit

The ideal time to visit a college campus is during spring break, since students will have plenty of time off and college students will all be on campus. Most high schools schedule their spring breaks in late March or in April whereas colleges usually have their spring breaks early to mid-March. Summer is also an option but there is not typically the same “campus vibe” since all but possibly a few summer school students are absent. In addition, many choice activities, e.g., sitting in on a class, will not be available during the summer sessions.

Another great time to visit is the end of the summer (for school systems that do not start until late August or after Labor Day), since most colleges are back in full swing by the middle of August.

There may also be some opportunities in the early fall to visit. Some colleges have fall visit days specifically designed for students. Most high schools will allow students to take time off for college visits and will count them as approved absences. If this is the case at your school, be sure all your students are aware of this policy.

Things Your Students Should Do on a Campus Visit

- Attend an Admissions Information Session.
- Go on a student led tour (usually follows the information session).
- Add to the standard tour the things you specifically want to see.
- Invite your tour guide to lunch, if you have time. He/she will give you an “off the tour” view of the school in a relaxed setting.
- Have lunch in the student center/cafeteria.

- Sit in on a class in a curriculum area of interest to you.
- Arrange to meet with department heads or faculty members in the subjects that interest you.
- Assess student life outside of academics, e.g., view the bulletin boards, read student publications, find out what goes on during the weekends.
- Talk to students, faculty and other staff on the campus.
- Check out the dorms (if not included on the tour).
- Tour the athletic facilities, especially if you are an athlete.
- Look up students who went to your high school and ask them about their experiences at the college.
- Be sure to sign in at the admissions office and/or personally greet your regional representative, as some colleges track interest.
- Attend a school-related event, if possible, such as an athletic event, a theater production or a concert.
- Spend some time in the surrounding community. As a student, you will probably not be on campus “24/7”. Assess the pros and cons of the community at large—are there nearby museums, theaters, shopping centers, etc.?

The Parent’s Role

Please remember that researching and organizing college visits is a great step towards independence for your son/daughter. Let them take the lead throughout this process. Support them by providing assistance with setting up flights, hotel reservations, etc., but everything else should be up to them.

- Allow your child to decide which colleges to visit.

- Allow your child to ask the questions while on campus.
 - If multiple tour groups are offered, consider going on a separate tour from your child and then compare notes when you get back together.
 - Allow your child to decide what things to see and do on campus.
 - Leave younger siblings at home, if possible, so you can focus on your college-bound child.
 - Try not to project your own feelings about your own college experience onto your child. Your child may be looking for very different things than you did.
 - Try to make the visit fun for your child. Remind him/her that the next four years will be an opportunity to learn new things, make lifelong friends and discover new interests.
5. The Athlete's Visit – athletes should plan for a more comprehensive visit that usually involves an overnight, time with the team and the coaches, as well as attending a team practice or attending a game.
 6. The Accepted Student's Visit – this is a post-offer visit that gives the student an opportunity to spend a day, and frequently overnight, at a school that has accepted them. Your student should take advantage of this opportunity to see the school again before they make their final decision.

Sample Questions to Ask While Visiting a College

- What are the school's most popular majors?
- What do students do on the weekends?
- Is there an emphasis on Greek life?
- Is service learning a strong part of the community on campus? Do you have any examples?
- Do students spend much time in the surrounding community?
- What is the normal class size? Do students get to know their professors?
- Is housing guaranteed all four years?
- What are the major issues on campus (social, political, etc.)?
- What one thing would you change if you could?
- What other schools did you (tour guide or other student) apply to and why did you choose this school?
- What about the school are you the most proud?
- How rigorous is the coursework? Is academic support available?
- Do students travel abroad? Where?

The Different Types of College Visits

1. The Drive-By – this is the visit where the student doesn't invest a lot of time, their parents are bugging them to at least set foot on the campus, or they are on a family vacation and it seems like a good idea to stop by area schools.
2. The Real Thing – a visit that includes an information session followed by a student led tour.
3. The Real Thing Plus – includes the above but also extra activities that are tailored to the students specific interests, e.g., going off tour, viewing different academic areas, sitting in on a class, meeting with the financial aid officer, meeting with a professor, etc.
4. The Overnight – staying overnight with a current student in a dorm, either someone they already know or someone assigned to be their host by the admissions office upon request.



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How does the process work?

- Is there a core curriculum?
- Is there an emergency notification system in place?
- What are the medical services available on campus?

Special Considerations for Student Athletes

Student athletes will have extra things to consider when planning their college visits. For example, their visits will most likely be scheduled in advance with coaches. According to the NCAA (National Collegiate Athletic Association), unofficial visits can be scheduled at any time at any Division level. At a Division I or II school, “official” visits are paid for by the college, can only be taken after the senior year starts and are limited in number (five for a Division I school).

Student athletes should make contact with coaches prior to a visit by completing the online athletic questionnaire accessed on the athletics link on the college website and by contacting the coach. In most cases, it is also advisable to have sent an athletic bio/resume and skills/highlight video or have one available to view on the internet.

An important part of an athlete’s visit is seeing the team in action and meeting potential teammates as well as seeing all of the athletic facilities. Student athletes will also have unique questions about academics and the social life on campus.

Will I be able to play my freshman year? What is the practice schedule? Is academic support provided to athletes? How many athletes on the team play my position?

Frequently, an overnight stay is part of an athlete’s visit to campus. This gives the athlete the chance to really get to know the coaching staff and the other members of the team, as well as possibly other students being recruited.

Remember that coaches and teammates will be watching you and assessing your character at the same time they are sizing you up as an athlete.

Do’s and Don’ts on a College Visit for

your students

DO’s

- DO plan your visit in advance – showing up cold makes it more difficult for you to tailor the visit to your needs and ensure you see what you want to see.
- DO give yourself adequate travel time, factoring in traffic and getting lost.
- DO talk to students on campus other than the tour guide.
- DO ask questions that you want answers to; this is not a time to be shy!
- DO wear comfortable clothing and shoes but be presentable. You want to make a good impression.
- DO be prepared for any kind of weather.

DON’TS

- DO NOT try to visit too many schools in one day. Usually two in one day is the most you can visit and still remember what you heard, saw, and experienced.
- DO NOT let your parent(s) do all the talking. They should be supportive bystanders but this is YOUR visit.
- DO NOT hesitate to go to the standard tour if you want to see particular things and to gather your own impressions.
- DO NOT forget to take notes and journal your thoughts and impressions.
- DO NOT forget to take lots of pictures. (See the page on photo tips for ideas and suggestions.)

Penny Deck, M.Ed., CEP, is a College Counselor at Maggie L. Walker Governor’s School and is the founder of Champion College Counseling, LLC (www.championcollegecounseling.com) in Richmond, Virginia. She can be reached at championcollege@gmail.com.

An Insider's Look at the New SAT

By Evan Wessler



The only real way to talk about something authoritatively is to go through it yourself. This goes doubly for education: it's nice to discuss things in theory, but there is no replacement for having experiences that require deep knowledge and present unique stressors. That, among other reasons, is why I sat for the redesigned SAT this May. (I was supposed to take the test when it was first administered in March, but the College Board pushed all non-student registrations to the May administration, citing security measures amidst several cheating scandals that have recently plagued the testing organization.) Having scrutinized the new exam for the past two years, I was not surprised by its content, but I did gain further valuable insight into the goals the College Board seeks to achieve with its updated exam.

In a LINK for Counselors article last fall, I described how reading-oriented the SAT was to become, and can now say with certainty that it does not disappoint. The first section—Reading—is nothing less than an onslaught of text, with passage after passage demanding consistent and intense focus. Though the section provides a much greater average time per question than the analogous Reading Test on the ACT (1 minute and 15 seconds per question on the SAT, versus a stingy 52.5 seconds per question on the ACT), its questions are inarguably written at a higher and more abstract level than the questions on the ACT. While the latter asks many questions whose answers can be pulled nearly verbatim from the text, the average SAT Reading question requires much more thought and a greater ability to deal with answer choices that are phrased in more advanced and indirect ways. This is especially so

for the “evidence” questions, which ask students to select the segment of text that provides the strongest support for their answer to the previous question. Though standardized tests have always been challenging to those students who disdain reading, the SAT sets the tone immediately: maintaining the wherewithal to think critically and quickly about words and ideas for 65 minutes is a tough slog. I found myself agonizing between two answers for a few questions, but the good news is that I was able to fall back on the same techniques I teach students in order to resolve the indecision. And this is the key: for the Reading especially, any student who wants to excel must scrupulously prepare for how to deal with the intensity and high level of analysis. Whereas the previous SAT featured passages in the relatively bite-sized form of 25- or 20-minute chunks, the Reading part of the new exam has graduated to a significantly more demanding level.

If any part of the test made me feel bad for the students in my testing room, it was the No Calculator Math section, the third of four sections (or five, if one elects to write the essay). During the 5-minute break after those 25 minutes, I could feel a sense of hopelessness and resignation set in amongst many of the students. Many of the comments I overheard are not fit for print, but suffice it to say that the test certainly demands fluency with operations and numbers in the absence of a calculator as a crutch. The same could be said for the final math section; despite the fact that it allows students calculators, there are now very few one-sentence “find x ” questions on the exam. Nearly every question provides rich context, demanding that students have a much deeper understanding of the reasoning behind the

math they're doing, and not just a rote recipe.

I couldn't resist sitting for the Writing portion of the exam, and I'm glad I did. I'll give kudos to the College Board for turning what was once a completely artificial and canned exercise into a task that actually does what it was meant to do: make students think. In completely abandoning the opinion-/perspective-based calamity that was the last SAT essay task, the College Board now challenges students to evaluate a primary source argument's effectiveness in clear terms that are far less susceptible to subjectivity. At risk of sounding like a total nerd, I actually enjoyed it, and agree that it will showcase a student's comprehension, analytical skills, and ability to convey ideas.

All that said, here's some good news for students: though the College Board has sought to make the SAT less "teachable"—claiming that it will instead emphasize what students who follow a rigorous high school curriculum should know—the exam remains extremely predictable. I'll be the first to admit that the College Board had me worried two years ago when it announced that one of its goals in revising the SAT was to construct an exam less conducive to strategy-based preparation; after all, the viability of Method Test Prep is predicated in large part on our ability to teach students the best ways to tackle the SAT using predictable techniques. Though the new exam is certainly less vulnerable to "tricks" and "shortcuts", I'm happy to let students know that employing smart strategy and technique is still the name of the game. On just about every question, I was able to use approaches that I and my colleagues have developed over the years to get to the answer. I was even able to consciously develop some new strategies on the fly during the exam, as the time restrictions made it advantageous to do (they do say necessity is the mother of invention). And so it stands: by focusing on common question types, cross-test similarities in the wording of questions and answer choices, intelligent pacing, and of course diligent practice, we can still teach motivated students to improve their scores dramatically.

No discussion about the SAT is complete without an analysis of the scoring. The score report comes back featuring an array of numbers, the most talked about of which are the Evidence-Based Reading and Writing (EWR), and Math scores, both out of 800. I would, however, encourage students to pay close attention to the content sub scores (out of 15) the

report provides, which can provide a specific window into the particular skills students must bolster to raise their scores. The sub scores are accompanied by colored lines on which the scores are plotted, giving students a very clear glance at their skill sets. These can be invaluable tools for students who seek to improve their scores during a future administration.

There has been much consternation—including a public spat between College Board's and ACT's administrators—over how new SAT and ACT scores "concord" with (equate to) one another. While the short answer is that the College Board has provided conversion tables, the long story is that the ACT insists the current comparison is invalid. Whether and how college admissions officers might compare students' scores using the College Board's numbers is a decision that will likely vary between admissions offices. It is for this reason that I advocate paying more attention to averages and percentiles particular to each exam, which are calculated by each of the testing organizations independently, and don't require conversion of scores on different scales. According to the latest numbers, the average score on the new SAT lies somewhere between 1040 and 1080 (section scores 520 to 540), and every score report supplies percentiles (which can be thought of as the percentage of students a particular student out-scores) for each section. I suspect, but cannot confirm, that amidst all of the confusion and argument, colleges will place a greater emphasis on percentiles than before, in order to feel more comfortable with their admissions decisions.

I'm happy to have taken the SAT, and will likely do so again to keep abreast of the slight changes to the test and to keep myself sharp. For those who are curious, I scored 1590: 800 on Evidence-Based Reading and Writing, 790 on Math—frustratingly, I made a mistake on one question—and straight 8s out of 8 on the three Essay subscores. I'll find out soon enough what my mistake was when I get the test back through the Question Answer Service, which all of your students can order for the October, January, and May exams. In all, the experience worked to emphasize what we have all known for a long time: practice makes perfect, or at the very least, close to it.

Evan Wessler is the VP Education of Method Test Prep. He can answer any questions you have about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing him at evan@methodtestprep.com or visiting the Method Test Prep website at www.methodtestprep.com.

A Powerful Partnership

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



Studies have found what schools have known for years— families play a vital role in educating America’s children. Numerous recent studies have found that those children whose parents are actively involved in their education are more motivated and achieve higher grades. It follows then, that you should partner with the parents of your students early on in the school year. Because you are a good counselor, encourage parental involvement and go to great lengths to foster this partnership. For this partnership to be successful, schools and parents need to work together, supporting the efforts of each other so children get more from school and achieve success. If you present yourself as a team player, you’ll teach parents what to focus on at home. Communicate that the concept of supporting education is changing from the basics of helping with homework to greater involvement in schools. Today, parents are volunteering in classrooms, chaperoning field trips, organizing parent committees and coordinating fundraising events.

By getting families involved, parents will learn about the quality of education their child is receiving, what they can do to boost their children’s success and bring about policy changes. Most parents are already having concerns about what activities their child is involved in and who is influencing their lives. However, they may not know how to get involved, take advantage of parent/teacher conferences, or just how much involvement is appropriate. The conference is a perfect opportunity to launch a partnership with your students’ parents that will function throughout the school year. To make the most of

the time you have with your students’ parents, schedule the conference early on, write down and take along with you a list of concerns, and consult with their child’s teachers beforehand. The better prepared you are, the more productive the meeting will be. If you have a concern that doesn’t come up, don’t hesitate to ask the parent. Be sure to ask for any relevant information that could be impacting your students’ progress such as divorce, new sibling or death in the family. Also, take notes and form a plan together to maximize your student’s education. At the end of the conference, summarize the main points and what is the best way to reach the parents.

Here are some things to review that you need to cover to form an alliance with your students’ parents, to get a complete picture of their educational experience:

- What do parents do at home to enhance their child’s educational experience?
- How will students be evaluated?
- How is the student doing on standardized tests and what do they mean?
- Answer is my child doing what is expected and performing up to potential?
- Are there areas the student is struggling with? If so, how can parents help at home?
- Does the student get along with peers?

- Are they a member of a clique?
- How are they coping with peer pressure?
- Ask parents what their goals are.
- How can I help my students achieve them?

The stakes are high and parental involvement makes high achievement possible. Beyond showing up for conferences and baking cupcakes, there are strategies that will foster partnerships. Everyone involved shares a responsibility. Together, they give kids the desire to work harder and succeed. When parents, teachers and counselors communicate effectively, everyone benefits— especially the kids. Communicating consistently and effectively with everyone is a great way to get families involved. However some parents are intimidated by school personnel's role as experts, when the reality is that parents are the expert when it comes to your students. When discussing your students, do not accept vague answers like, they are doing well. Ask for details. What are the goals for their kids, is college an option, and if so, how are they preparing? What are the subjects kids are turned on by? What are their weaknesses? Will they be taking the SAT's? Show the parent that you are a partner not an adversary. Try to be open-minded and friendly. Let your student's family know you are available and understand the importance of parental involvement. Keep in mind you're all working towards the same goal— the students' successful and satisfying educational experience. Share these tips in a handout with parents to foster their involvement as well.

Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch lives of young people through her writing.



How To Make Your Home Education Friendly

- ✓ Let your child know schoolwork is a priority and discuss the value of a good education. Regularly inform friends and family about academic successes and celebrate accomplishments.
- ✓ Touch base with your child everyday and communicate about homework, projects and tests that are upcoming. On a day-to-day basis, ask what their day was like and listen closely. Try to determine if they are getting along with teachers and peers, and what their interests are. Respond with enthusiasm and offer feedback.
- ✓ Set high, but realistic academic standards.
- ✓ Stay in touch with teachers and counselors .
- ✓ Make regular family visits to libraries, museums and historical sites.
- ✓ Designate a study area free of distractions, that is fully stocked with school supplies, a computer, dictionaries, reference books and calculators.
- ✓ Maintain a daily routine and a stress free, supportive home

How to help your students land their dream internship

By Brittany Maschal

Students need to do research, a lot of research. This takes time, but the internet makes it a lot less time consuming than it used to be; Google is their friend! Here are a few steps counselors can walk and support students through to help them land their dream internship.

Step one: Research. Students need to know, does their dream employer hire interns? You can check on most companies 'jobs' or 'careers' pages, or by simply giving them a call. If so, step one complete!

Step two: if they offer internships publicly: Have students consider a resume format that will help them stand out from the crowd, like a skills-based or a quick-burst, or minimalist approach. Also, make sure they set up a LinkedIn profile and that it is accurate and up to date. If they do not have one, they need to get one. I am not a fan of crazy over the top gimmicks, but I do advocate for thinking outside of the box when it comes to going after a role you want. This may mean taking a minimalist approach to a resume, as job seekers often think cramming as much as they can onto their resume is a good thing, when it is not. The job hunt, let alone internship hunting, isn't easy, and with many employers you will get one shot—so make it count.

Step two-point-five if they do not offer internships publicly: Follow step two and pitch for one anyway. The internet is a crazy-informative place, and students can most likely find HR contacts or, at least, a general careers contact via Google or LinkedIn for most employers. If not, there is always the general information email they can use. If a student has trouble remembering to follow up or

are sending out tons of emails, have them try using a system like Boomerang (I do, it rocks).

This cold call/pitch approach is how I obtained many roles in my career. They were not waiting for me on a website to apply, my mom and dad didn't offer them up—I asked for them. There are not many employers I know of that will say no to a qualified individual who can sell why company X needs to bring them in a short term or a temporary capacity (the exception being if there is some legal reason they would not be allowed to bring them on). The worst thing that can happen is your student does not get a role that was not there for the taking, so they cannot feel too bad about that. You have to play to win, even if you weren't formally invited to play, right?

Step three: If possible, have students have a letter of support sent on their behalf. Can a friend or mentor that works in their field of interest send one, or is there a professor who can speak to their intellectual horsepower and fit for a role? If so, have your student find a time to chat with them about their plan to land their dream internship and ask for their support. A student can talk themselves up all they want in their cover letter or pitch email, but having someone else vouch for them will help demonstrate that it's not just talk—it's the truth. Having this level of additional feedback and advocacy at the pre-interview stage can help their dream employer get a better sense of who they are and what they can bring to the table. It never hurts to ask, so have them reach out to those closest to them that are well positioned to support their career candidacy—this may even be you!

One important thing students need to consider is if the internship roles offered are paid or unpaid, is college credit offered or no? Students should check on this before they craft a plan to land a role there. In some industries and cities (like NYC), there are strict regulations regarding the hiring of both paid and unpaid interns. Review the guidelines on the Department of Labor website so they know their rights, what is legal, and what is illegal. What's good to know is that federal labor laws require payment of interns in most circumstances (like at a non-profit, but the pay/not pay rule here is not cut and dry).

When it comes to helping students land their dream internship, guide them to think outside of the box. Even if their dream employer doesn't offer an internship program, prompt students to reach out and voice their value add anyway. You never know who may appreciate this initiative and invite them to come on board.

Dr. Maschal worked in administration and student services at a number of Universities including Princeton, Penn and JHU, and is the Founder of B. Maschal Educational Consulting. You can check out her website at Brittany.consulting

Internship Resources

Internships.com - This is a service of Chegg and lists thousands of internships available

Buzzcareer.com - Has a host of Internships listed on their site paying from \$9-22 per hour.

Dointernships.com - Site to learn about different kinds of internships available and searches available at no cost.

<http://college.monster.com/education> - Monster's site with listings of internships available for students

LinkedIn.com/jobs - LinkedIn is now listing thousands of internships available

Google.com - If your students are looking for a specific internship in a narrow field in a specific location Google may actually be their best bet.



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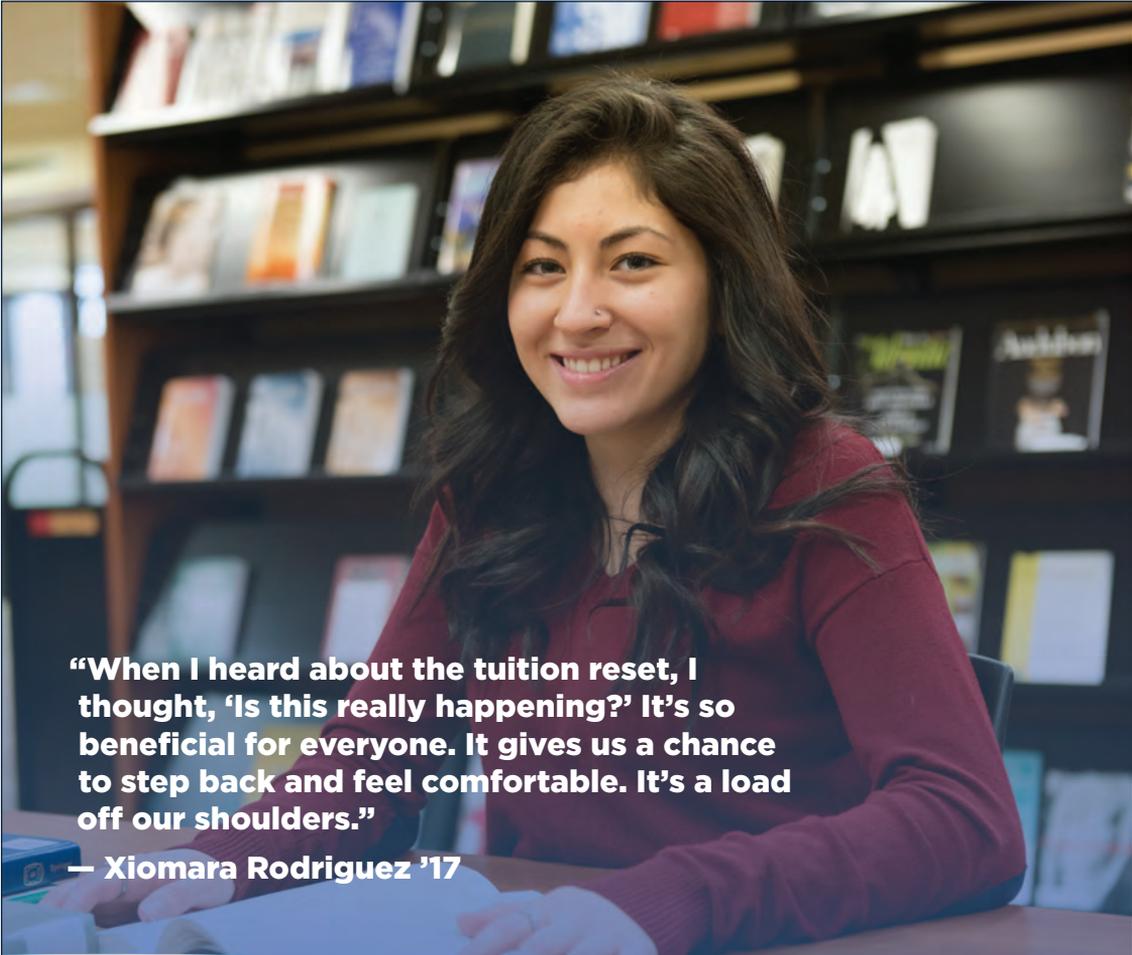
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Careers in Emergency Management

By David Bjorkman & Roseann Cordelli

Imagine that relentless, torrential rains pummel your community, resulting in massive flooding that turns streets into canals and destroys homes, roads and bridges, grocery stores and pharmacies, schools, hospitals, and other essential services across a wide area. Thousands of people and families are displaced and homeless, having lost everything to a devastating natural disaster that renders water undrinkable and causes neighborhoods to go dark when the sun sets. Local fire, police, and hospital emergency departments are overwhelmed with more demands for time, manpower, and resources than exist, to address every need. Nursing home residents are swiftly moved to higher ground, prison inmates are transferred to another facility, potable water is unavailable, and downed power lines pose life-threatening dangers that go beyond a community in the dark. This scenario actually requires little imagination because each year, natural, manmade, biological, and technological disasters alter lives, economic well-being, and the physical landscape somewhere across America.

Disasters have been recorded throughout time. However, it was not until the late-20th century that the field of emergency management emerged as a professional occupational discipline, requiring formal academic preparation and training. From the manmade Tylenol product-tampering crisis in 1982 to Category 5 Hurricane Andrew a decade later, the need for trained crisis managers escalated. Unquestionably, the historical benchmark that demanded an educated force of emergency managers was the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001, when nearly 3,000 American



Natural and manmade disasters will continue to occur. Emergency management students are trained to lead efforts that prepare for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate against impacts caused by these events.

Photo is courtesy of David Bjorkman.

lives were lost and symbols of American economic and military strength were destroyed. The public outcry for trained, well-equipped emergency managers quickly resonated across national media and public agendas at the community level. Only a few years later in 2005, the issues, challenges, and impacts of Hurricane Katrina again brought emergency management to the forefront, as the nation saw images of thousands of New Orleans' citizens stranded in a flood-devastated city. More recently, the H1N1 pandemic, Boston Marathon bombing, Sandy Hook school shooting, winter snow blizzards and ice storms, and widespread forest fires reminded America that our nation's safety and security will continue to be challenged by any number and combination of threats — those that can be predicted and others which cannot.

Many people think of emergency management in its traditional context, with a focus on first responders – the firefighters, police officers, 911 operators, and emergency medical personnel who arrive first on a disaster scene to rescue people from harm's way. Students pursuing academic training in emergency management today, however, are trained in means and methods that go beyond these essential on-scene response efforts. Emergency managers focus on the “whole community,” and are trained to anticipate and plan for, respond to, recover from, and mitigate crises by building community resilience.

Emergency managers must be equipped with an extensive toolbox of knowledge, best practices, and applied skills. These range from how to recognize and anticipate hazards and vulnerabilities,

effectively communicate to all stakeholders, and identify and merge a community's social, economic, cultural, and physical assets to build resilience against future disasters' impacts. Trained emergency managers understand the importance of developing and sustaining networks of people and resources to expand capacity. They recognize the need for public-private partnerships at a time when government disaster-related funding is shrinking. These community partners deliberately include wide-reaching and diverse organizations, such as first responders (fire, police, EMS); hospitals and healthcare organizations; public works departments and transportation providers; public officials; traditional and social media; non-profit and civic organizations (American Red Cross, United Way, Rotary); private businesses (grocery stores, debris haulers, pharmacies, telecommunications providers), faith-based organizations, volunteers, and others.

Emergency managers bring the skills and resources of their community partners to bear into a coordinated emergency management structure to address needs of the whole community in each phase of emergency management (preparation, response, recovery, and mitigation). This includes recognizing community mental and critical health needs; coordinating and providing basic life necessities (such as food, water, clothing, and shelter); and communicating crisis information, particularly to vulnerable populations (such as those with physical and cognitive limitations, language and cultural barriers, those who cannot self-evacuate, and those without access to mainstream messages). As a trusted community pillar, emergency managers offer life-protecting information (either directly, through the media, or via familiar community organizations) that prepares and calms people, and engenders cooperation when it is needed most.

Emergency management baccalaureate programs prepare students to be trusted leaders in their communities. Through a combination of theory, event simulation, and real-life practice, students are trained for careers in whole community emergency management and public safety. Curriculums are deliberately designed to equip students with a comprehensive understanding and hands-on application of skills across the emergency management spectrum. This includes training and education that enables them to analyze natural, manmade, biological, and technological hazards

and vulnerabilities; understand ways to build community partnerships that expand resources and capacity; communicate risks and safety information, as well as the do's and do not's of crisis communications and psychological first aid; and recognize how local, state, and federal laws, regulations, policies, and procedures influence emergency management's whole-community approach.

Graduates of emergency management degree programs can expect a wide variety of employment opportunities. This includes local, county, state, and federal emergency management and intelligence agencies; hospitals, healthcare facilities, and public health departments; school districts, colleges, and universities; military; private-sector consulting; major industries (manufacturing and production, infrastructure, transportation, telecommunications and technology); first response (emergency medical personnel, police, firefighters, and 911 dispatchers); volunteer management and disaster relief organizations; and beyond.

Of this we can be sure — communities will continue to be impacted by disasters and Americans will have the resolve to help each other when help is needed most. Emergency managers live by the credo that “all disasters are local,” suggesting that regardless of the true geographic magnitude of an event, preparation and help happen at the community level — one neighborhood and one citizen at a time.

Mr. David Bjorkman is a full-time instructor of Emergency Management at the Pennsylvania College of Technology in Williamsport, Pennsylvania. Formerly a hospital emergency management coordinator and a law enforcement officer in both a major American city and a college community, he has had hands-on experience across the entire emergency management spectrum in both the public and private sectors.

Ms. Roseann Cordelli is an adjunct instructor of emergency management at Penn College and has consulted in emergency management for natural, biological, and manmade disasters. She has worked in the fields of community/public relations, public administration, and crisis communications for more than 35 years.

First Up!

More first generation students are heading to college. How can you help?

By Jim Paterson



While there is plenty of discussion today about students who are the first in their families to attend college, experts say there is still an equal amount of misinformation and layers of challenges for them in the complex and expensive effort to get a college degree.

But school counselors can play a critical role in getting these first generation students – who now comprise one third of our students from 5-17 years old – interested in college, helping them apply to a suitable school, pay for it and prepare for their time in college so they can be certain to finish and get a degree.

Counselors have heard about the problems these students face – from not having the support in a family where college may not be valued, to being “under-matched”, or directed to a college below their capabilities.

But Rachel Fishman, a senior policy analysis for the New America Foundation who has studied the topic, says while these students deserve attention, counselors should be wary about generalizations.

“You can’t really make assumptions about first generation students,” she says. “By assuming too much you can discount a strength or overlook an individual need. Each of these students are very different.”

The data

There is certainly research to suggest there are patterns to first generation students, who now make up half of the students attending college. However, the statistic that most concerns Fishman and oth-

ers is their failure to graduate.

A report from the First Generation Foundation says that nearly 90 percent of low-income first generation students will leave college within six years. A quarter leave after their first year — four times the dropout rate of higher-income, second-generation students, the report says.

And counselors are being singled out as a resource to help. A recent White House conference focused on how counselors should be playing a bigger role in getting middle school and high school students excited about college, and preparing them to attend. A 2007 study indicated that more than their classmates, these students rely on school counselors for advice about college.

“Relative to their peers, first generation students are distinct in their lower self-confidence and academic preparation,” the study by the The Higher Education Research Institute says. “They are more likely to reflect concerns with financial security in their choices, have more obstacles to attending college and have different and higher expectations of their college experience.”

Knowing all this, how can a high school counselor help?

Abigail Swisher, a research associate working with Fisher at the New America Foundation, says the biggest problem with counselors being able to work with first generation students may be in the nature of the public school counseling positions.

“At lower income schools which these students are

more likely to attend, there may not be a counselor specifically assigned to do college counseling, the school counselor's caseload may be higher and the students at the school may have other, more complex concerns. That makes it hard for them to support a first generation student who may need even more help with this process," she says.

Counselors have to make time for this important step for students, she adds.

Get them started early

Mandy Savitz-Romer, a former school counselor and now a senior lecturer at the Harvard Graduate School of Education specializing in topics like this, says nonetheless, counselors play a critical role in helping these students.

"Just as girls once learned very quickly that science wasn't for them, first generation students can learn that college is not for them, if we're not careful," she told *More* magazine. "Some kids have already given up on the college idea by ninth grade. This work starts in middle school."

That can mean getting these students to consider careers that require college degrees by having them

take interest assessments and introducing them to to things like career days, which might have even more value at low income schools

Provide encouragement

"I still remember how one of my high school counselors told me that I shouldn't apply to Princeton," said First Lady Michelle Obama, first in her family to attend college. She recalled that moment in a speech in Atlanta a few years ago. "She told me I would never make it there, that I was setting my sights too high. Can you believe that? She told me, 'don't bother.'"

The First Lady has gone on to challenge school counselors to encourage students from difficult circumstances and help them explore colleges and understand the experiences of students who have similar backgrounds (see sidebar on resources).

John Newbold, an associate professor at Sam Houston State University in Huntsville, TX, where more than 60 percent of students are first generation, also has researched the topic and says support from other adults is key. And, while he agrees with Fishman and Swisher about erroneous assumptions concerning these students, he knows they need help. And not just to get into the appropriate school, he

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says, but to stay there.

“They are hard workers and they want to be here, but they do have some strikes against them, and counselors could offer support that would help,” he says, citing his research, which called first generation students “more pragmatic, with a more serious approach to their college education relative to their counterparts.”

He notes often that the fact that college has not been a big part of their family’s experience makes exploring and attending college harder. He says sometimes families also want the young person to work in their business or get a paycheck to help with tight family resources. Students sometimes even go back to work in family businesses after they have received their degree.

However, the Higher Education Research Institute found these issues are changing, and the parents of first generation students are increasingly supportive, often more so, than parents who have attended college.

Regardless, Newbold says high school counselors can help the student and their family understand the value of college, deal with the tension that different perspectives might create and prepare the student for other such pressures in the future.

Academic support

Fishman notes that school counselors should recognize that smart, motivated first generation students may need to be identified at an early age so that they can be in college-track courses, which can start to line up in middle school. Often their families aren’t aware of the courses college require, or pathway leading to them.

They may need supplemental work – even in the summer before college – to catch up because, Newbold says, they often show up in college without strong enough skills in Math and English.

The College Board reported that about 1/3 of first generation students took Algebra in 8th grade compared to about 1/2 of non first generation students. About 40 percent of students overall took AP stem classes, while only 24 percent of first generation students did – and their AP test scores tended to be a point less.

Jonathan Rothwell, a researcher at the Brookings



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Institute who has studied the value of college, particularly for low income and first generation students, says with these deficits, it is even more important that high school students look for a college where the value of the education is high and the costs are reasonable, and not necessarily Ivy League schools or others with the biggest price tag. Nor necessarily community colleges he says, where twice as many first generation students go compared to other students.

The value and quality of the education combined is key, he says, especially for students who face these challenges. He notes a school's value can be best determined using criteria like his value added formula or the Obama administration's college scorecard, which break away from some traditional measures that focused on the cost of the college, the number of students applying or the make-up of its freshman class as measures of its success.

"Most of my friends were only considering in-state schools. Our high school only had information and brochures about in-state schools. They seemed so much cheaper than private institutions," Pomona College student Seanna Leath wrote in a recent blog post for I'm First, an online community for first generation students. She thinks they perhaps should have considered others.

Helping with the choice

Fishman says that helping first generation students make a careful choice is key, overcoming tendencies of certain students to attend certain schools, or colleges to recruit from specific areas. Under-matching, she says, is a problem counselors can help students overcome.

Newcomb, however, is also concerned about there being an assumption that students should go to the most prestigious school available.

"There increasingly are programs that help students get into schools like Yale or Harvard or Stanford. But then they get there and it is a whole different environment than they are used to. It is very challenging academically, they are away from their families, and the environment – even the weather -- may be very different. Maybe the kids there go skiing on the weekend for \$300. That can make the experience very difficult for a first generation student".

Megan Cooke, a first generation sophomore at Whitman College in Window Rock, AZ, has also noted that it is often important for students to be around others who are like them.

"It's no surprise that among the brightly colored, well-illustrated brochures colleges hand out, diversity is one of the statistics that is a hit and run," she noted in a blog entry at I'm First. "Bringing up a conversation surrounding diversity on campus seems to be an awkward conversation to start during tours or interviews. But diversity, it is very important."

Dropping out

Fishman and Swisher also are concerned about the first generation students who don't complete their degree, and say counselors should reinforce with students that college will be challenging but a four-year degree will pay off.

"The more education you have, the better off you'll be," says Rothwell. "That still holds true."

Newbold, in his research, has suggested several supports a colleges can offer to avoid students leaving school, including "live and learn" opportunities beforehand, where they get to experience a college campus. He says counselors can help students look for schools that offer such support. Swisher also notes that first generation students often don't even make it to school because of what colleges refer to

as “summer melt,”— where worry, academics, or the paperwork required by the college for financial aid deters them.

George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, for six weeks offers a Student Transition Empowerment Program where students stay on campus and take two three-credit classes over the summer for six weeks and learn about campus services and how courses will operate. Unfortunately, experts say these programs are more common today and that they often fill up fast. George Mason’s program is only available to about 30 students.

Swisher says even if counselors keep in touch with these students online over the summer to encourage them (one program offers reminder text messages), it will help.

Financial aid

Nearly 90 percent of first generation students apply for financial aid while only 70 percent of students whose parents have attended college do.

First generation students often suffer from the same misunderstandings about financial aid as their counterparts – the differences between merit and need scholarships, loans and grants. Even more than other students, they may need to have a good understanding of how a student can pay for school, though Swisher notes that often undocumented parents, or others who are new to this country, are reluctant to disclose personal information, which is critical for financial aid.

She and Fishman say there are many non-profit organizations who are trying to help first generation students but it is critical that while they aim high and find a challenging program, they should be realistic about the expense, since a major cause of them dropping out is running out of money.

“There are so many pressures on these kids, but sometimes it just comes down to dollars and cents,” says Newbold.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, DE.

Resources for first generation students

The College Board has a page about first generation students – with specific information about what counselors should do.

There are several sites where students can hear about the experiences of other first generation students like firstgenerationstudent.com, which has a lot of information about the college application process and step-by-step FAFSA instructions.

The Center for Student Opportunity, the national nonprofit behind I’m First, which features blogs and videos from first generation students and graduates, and the Mytonomy site offers high school students information about college with a section dedicated to first generation students and a “counselors kit” page that has a lot of information for counselors. The American Association of State Colleges and Universities also has a collection of stories by first generation students telling their stories and offering advice on its First Generation Voices page.

Federal Financial aid programs include Trio, with eight programs to help disadvantaged students, and Gear Up. For more tools, including a cost calculator, visit ReachHigher.gov.

The website Admitted.ly asks about student preferences, then cross-references that information with their GPA and test scores to produce a list of schools they may find appealing, ranked by how likely they are to get in.

Pre-Law Advising Starts Now

By Elizabeth Drucker



You may have at least a handful of students who approach you about ways they can prepare for a career as an attorney. And maybe, you work with students who seem to have a way with words and a special knack for arguing and advocating for themselves. Many students in your high school may be set on a law career, but don't know how to pursue it. There are many steps you can take to facilitate and support your students as they continue through the high school curriculum exploring law. Perhaps, your school may even offer classes in law, such as business law. However, it doesn't matter how restrictive your class offerings are because with a little creativity, any student can find experiences that will enhance their entrance into the legal profession.

First, you need to make sure that your students have an accurate understanding of what law careers are really like. According to Erin Reichelt, a pre-law advisor at the University of Minnesota, "the best thing that any individual considering law school can do is to speak to actual working attorneys instead of relying on impressions from TV or movies

to guide choices. The work of an attorney has very little to do with being in a courtroom." It is very important for you to make sure that your students realize that. It may even be helpful to have some sort of career night where you bring in a handful of attorneys to discuss the day-to-day realities of their job. In describing the realities of the legal profession, Ms. Reichelt states that "the practice of law is very similar to doing homework for a living" which is clearly something your students would want to be aware of before taking the plunge.

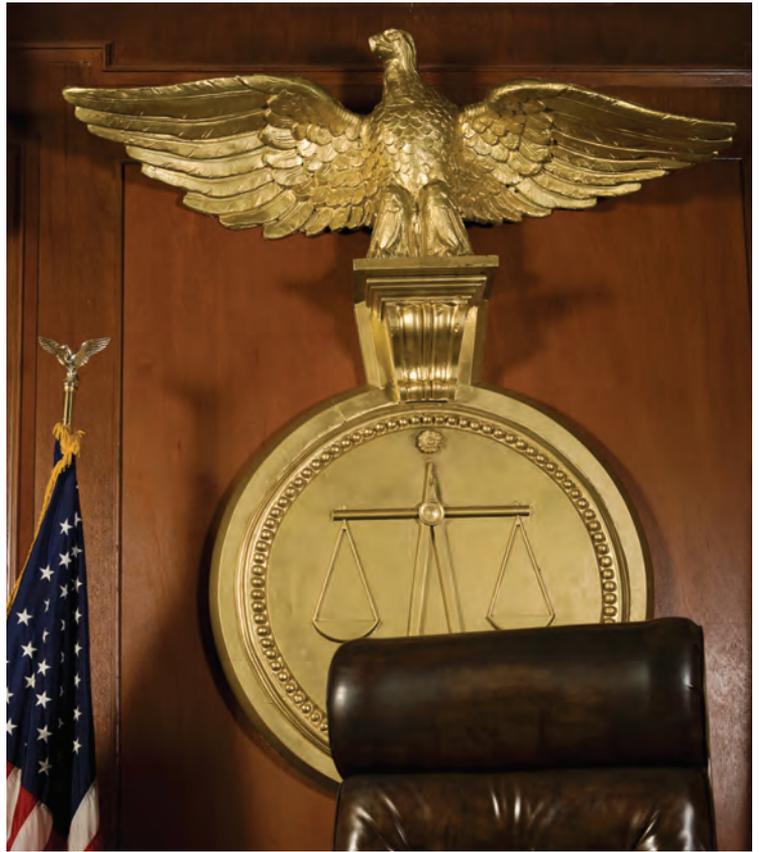
There are other ways that a high school student can investigate the legal field. Ms. Mattie Stevens, a pre-law advisor at the University of Kansas suggests job shadowing and sitting in on trials in the courthouse. The student might also want to explore other related careers such as policy or other aspects of government. She also explains that students should have a working knowledge of the structure and history of the government. Finally, Ms. Reichelt states that two-thirds of incoming law students have taken at least one year off from school before enrolling in law school.

As a high school guidance counselor, there are many things you can do to help your students prepare for law school. Ms. Stevens suggests your students take classes in history and civics. Philosophy and writing classes also teach important skills to students interested in legal careers, especially when they include skills in developing logic. Debate and public speaking also help, in addition to forensics and mock trials. Ms. Reichelt reiterates the need to prepare extensively in writing classes. In addition, she says that classes in economics and statistics are good classes because they provide students with tools for "analyzing information." Finally, she recommends psychology "as much in law is simply working with people on finding solutions to problems."

Perhaps the best way to gain exposure to the legal field is through an internship. These can be hard to find, but in most cities, opportunities can be found with a little creativity. Ms. Reichelt explains that most internships are found through connections. She mentions that the internship doesn't have to be in a law firm.

Many non-profit organizations are thrilled to have interns in the summer. It doesn't have to be the most prestigious organization, as long as you are learning something. Ms. Reichelt says that this experience students gain as high school students will make them better applicants for the better internships when they are in college. It is also important to note that "at it's core, much of the work of an attorney is serving clients." This means that even a part-time job in retail or food service will let you know if you are able to work with people who have real-life problems. She also says that any work experience you can get now will be helpful when you are getting ready to start your career.

Overall, a career in law is what you make of it. There are many different fields in the law and plenty of opportunities for your students to explore.



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The little school that could is helping students climb higher.

By Connie Voss



Mount Carmel High School was a mainstay in a small Houston area community called Garden Villas, but when the Catholic Church announced the school's closure—the community took action.

Not only is Garden Villas a close-knit community of modest homes and working class people but the community association even has its own radio station. The area also had its own treasured private Catholic high school named Mount Carmel Academy. When the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Galveston-Houston announced it could no longer provide monetary support for the school and it was to be closed, the community of Garden Villas, the Mount Carmel faculty, and former students launched an all-out campaign and prayer vigil to make sure the school would survive and continue to provide a better quality education for area students.

Almost immediately, Houston Independent School District (HISD) realized the school was worth saving and proposed reopening Mount Carmel as an HISD charter school. Charter schools in Texas mean they typically provide a step-above the average

public school offering; charter schools are just about as close as you can get to a private school education without tuition. In fact, Mount Carmel is a college preparatory academy. Students transferring in from other schools say the material at Mount Carmel is more challenging than the public schools from which they came.

Nothing about Mount Carmel or its counselor is “average...”

The high school's college counselor is Dru Watkins. His background is not that of a typical counselor. He got his B.A. in Philosophy and earned his M.A. in Humanities, both from the University of Houston. He interned as a marketing copywriter at a company specializing in internet SEO (Search Engine Optimization). He was also a musician playing at various local venues; he is an avid reader and lover of the English language. He never imagined himself teaching in a high school until one of his mentors suggested he apply to Mount Carmel. Coincidentally, his mother and several of his uncles had attended the school years earlier. “It must have been some sort of weird fate,” he says. He applied and got the job as an English teacher—while the astute and proactive school principal Maureen Giacchino also pegged him as the ideal college counselor. As a result, “I do double duty here at the school,” Dru continued. “On the one hand I am a classroom teacher of dual credit English—that means students get both high school and college credit for taking our advanced English class. I am a teacher and disciplinarian while in the classroom and as a counselor I am their advocate, confidante and guide as they traverse the road to enter the

realm of higher learning. My job is to inspire, encourage and motivate.”

Most people think of a private or semi-private school as serving the most well-to-do in society but that is not the case at Mount Carmel, where the student body is 84% economically disadvantaged. Even though most parents and single moms are of average or below average annual household income levels, they care about their children and want them to achieve. “Most of our students want to go to college,” says Dru. “In order to graduate, our seniors must provide a college acceptance letter. Anywhere from 80-90 percent of the students go on to attend a college or university. Our students are just as hungry to go to college as those from the better known and often expensive private schools.”

Giving back is required...

Mount Carmel seniors must also complete 100 hours of volunteer service, mostly to the Garden Villas community, before they can graduate. Volunteer service must be strictly non-paid and students often serve at the Houston Food Bank, tutor children at a Garden Villas elementary school or participate in Navidad En El Barrio—a non-profit organization that provides entertainment, lunch and gifts to disadvantaged school children, especially during the Christmas season.

“Most of our students need grants and scholarships to help them monetarily as they continue their education,” Dru emphasized. “I encourage them to apply for financial aid and then I help them ‘get out of the gate’ with their essays. I find it rewarding to simply brainstorm with them and assist them in getting their thoughts together. It’s amazing to see how a bit of encouragement and organization can spark creativity. Since the essays cannot be braggadocios, I offer loose guidelines then let them fly. They seem to blossom on their own when expressing their unique strengths in writing.”

Dru thinks it is important that his students understand the various cultures of the schools they find interesting or attractive. He explains, “Each college or university has its own proficiencies, attitudes, beliefs and customs. These are often inferred and not written. Therefore, I encourage college representatives to come to our campus and tell our students about their schools. Our students are motivated by these introductions. I like to give them a ‘taste’ of what they can expect before they make a

final decision.”

It’s very clear that Dru Watkins wants to help his students and steer them in the right direction. He is like the consummate salesman who listens more than he speaks. The size of Mount Carmel (currently 353 students) allows him to get to know his students on a personal level rather than them being a vague face or a number. He says he loves his one-on-one counseling but also relishes the “all-at-once” advisory group meetings when 80 or more students meet to have an open discussion about their goals and college plans, and to express their hopes, fears and concerns.

Nearly all of the student’s parents are working one, or even two, jobs and don’t have a lot of spare time, but there is never a shortage of parents who donate or volunteer to help at the school or with school activities. “There is a community team spirit here that is seldom found in large metropolitan area neighborhoods,” Dru observed. “One only has to look at the way everyone rallied around Mrs. Giacchino when she went to bat to help keep this school going. I even rented a home here so I could be a part of the community rather than just an outsider commuting in; I want to be part of this unique ‘can do’ spirit.”

And speaking of “spirit”, since Mount Carmel has become part of the public school system, religion is no longer taught. They instead place emphasis on character building, perseverance, conflict resolution and the realistic outcomes of poor behaviors including alcohol/drug addiction.

In the children’s tale of “The Little Engine That Could”, a small train engine overcame a seemingly impossible task simply by thinking it could. Mount Carmel was once on the verge of becoming unsustainable; but its spirit not only survived—it now thrives. If the school’s staff, students and the Garden Villas community has anything to do with it, there is no obstacle that can’t be overcome and there is no mountain this little school can’t climb.

Connie Voss has been writing professionally for over 40 years. Her body of work includes a wide range of technical articles and human interest stories. She researched and wrote St. Thomas High School in the 20th Century an account of the first 100 years of a well-known Houston, Texas boys’ school. She writes a monthly column on advertising and marketing and assists a variety of industrial firms with their advertising communications.

Help Your Seniors Understand The College Essay Prompt

By Kim Lifton



The Class of 2017 should be making progress with their college plans by now. How are they doing on those college application essays?

The essay can be the most daunting part of the application process. But it doesn't have to be. You can help your students move forward in the process, and make their lives a little bit easier if you:

- Make sure your students understand what the prompt is asking.
- Tell students that reflection is the key to standing out in any application essay.
- Explain that the essay must be personal and focus on the student who writes it.
- Set realistic expectations for the essay. Sometimes parents and counselors are harder on the students than the admissions team that reads them.

Why is Everyone So Anxious?

As admission to the nation's most selective schools becomes increasingly competitive, the college essay has been rising in significance as well. Because of this, there's a lot of information on the web and in books, and many well-meaning adults out there trying to help your students.

Unfortunately, so much of the information about the essay is confusing, gimmicky or simply inaccurate. We know that's not helpful to you or your students. They become so anxious and frustrated they cannot

think – or write. They shut down.

The good news: You don't have to do as much as you might think to get them on the right track.

Admissions readers are not grading essays for powerful prose and sentence structure. They want to know who the applicant is. And they want students to answer the question and show reflection. This can be especially difficult for a teen who is angling to get out of the house and would rather focus on the future.

Consider what Calvin Wise, the director of recruitment for Johns Hopkins University, has to say. When he reads a good essay, Wise gets excited and will share it with colleagues. He doesn't see any reason to share grades and test scores. Just like admissions officers at other highly selective schools, Wise expects 4.0 GPAs and top scores on the ACT, SAT and AP exams.

“We need to dig deeper,” Wise says. “That’s where the essay comes into play. That’s where we find out more about the student. We are looking for your story. Academically, we are glad you’ve done well. We want to know who you are. What did your experience mean to you? How did it shape you?”

If you want your students' applications to stand out, make sure they write essays that reviewers will take seriously. If you teach them how to reflect, the writing process will be easier.

Teach Your Students How to Reflect

The real work on the essay comes at the begin-

ning of the process. First, make sure each student understands the prompt.

Ask your student to take a look at these instructions for the Common Application personal statement:

The essay demonstrates your ability to write clearly and concisely on a selected topic and helps you distinguish yourself in your own voice. What do you want the readers of your application to know about you apart from courses, grades, and test scores?

Choose the option that best helps you answer that question and write an essay of no more than 650 words, using the prompt to inspire and structure your response. Remember: 650 words is your limit, not your goal. Use the full range if you need it, but don't feel obligated to do so.

There are five prompts that a student can choose from. It does not matter which prompt a student selects, or which one you like best. The key question is always: What do you want colleges to know about you? This is your student's opportunity to shine, to offer readers some insight into who she is beyond grades, test scores and activities.

If your students understand what each prompt is

asking before they start writing, they will be in a much better position to reflect and answer the prompt to help round out their applications for college. It's a thinking task as much as it is a writing task. Students need to let colleges know what they want to share with them.

Now take a look at these two examples from the Common App.

The first is the question most students selected last year. It's the first one on the list of prompts.

Some students have a background, identity, interest, or talent that is so meaningful they believe their application would be incomplete without it. If this sounds like you, then please share your story.

Ultimately, an essay responding to this prompt is not about a student's background, identity, interest, talent or experience; it's about why that background, identity, interest or talent matters to the student.

Admissions officers read these essays to find out something they don't already know about your student. They can tell from the application if an applicant is on the lacrosse team or in the school

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orchestra, or if he worked as a researcher, a hospital aide or a bagger in a grocery store. What they don't know is how those experiences affected any student or what yours learned about himself. They have no idea how your student has changed. The essay is the place to share such insights.

A student can respond to this prompt by sharing any type of story or topic — a description of a significant conversation, a time when they realized something personally important — anything that truly and vividly demonstrates who they are. A student need not climb a mountain or travel to another country. Babysitting or making meatballs with grandma, navigating an icy highway or playing basketball with friends works too.

Colleges Want to Know How Your Students THINK!

The why (the learning or insight) is more important than the what (the experience). When working with your seniors, keep asking the key question we use with our students, and make sure each one of them has a clear answer before settling on an essay topic. Again, the question is this: What do you want colleges to know about you beyond your grades, test

scores, extracurricular activities? You can break it up, or expand on it, too:

- What do you want college to know about you? Why?
- What did you do? Why? Why would a college be interested in this? What does it show about you that they can't find out from the rest of your application?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How does this experience show who you really are?

If you get stuck, "why?" is always a good question. We ask our students "why?" all the time. We also tell them that no matter how they use the essays in the admissions process, colleges don't measure how good they are with rubrics; it's part of a holistic review process. They want to know how the applicant thinks. To stand out, essays do share a few common features, regardless of the prompt – or the school. They:

- Answer the question.

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- Showcase a positive trait or characteristic.
- Sound like a high school student.
- Illustrate something meaningful about the student.
- Demonstrate reflection.

For the application year 2016-17, the Common App offered four other prompt choices as well. The University of California asks students to choose four out of eight Personal Insight Questions. Many institutions in Texas use the ApplyTexas application, with its own personal statement prompts.

Scores of schools have begun accepting the Coalition application, which also offers four personal statement choices. And many state universities ask their own personal statement questions on their independent applications. While we cannot predict what the admissions process will look like in the future, all evidence indicates the essay will remain — and it will continue to grow in importance.

You Can Help Students Dig a Little Deeper

Sometimes students don't dig deep enough to write a reflective piece. Here are some examples of what we tell our students when we're not sure they're being reflective enough in their personal statements:

- If you chose this story because it happened on a trip to Kenya, then it's about Kenya. If the same story would have been equally meaningful if it had taken place in your grandmother's backyard, then the story is about you.
- If the essay is meaningful only because you won the championship, then it's about the winning goal. If it would have been equally meaningful if you hadn't won, then it's about you, and what you learned or demonstrated about yourself.
- A sad story about poverty, lack of opportunity or uncommon obstacles is not enough to draw readers in. Show us how you faced these challenges and what that demonstrates about your character.

You can get more information about helping your



students prepare for the essay in our new eBook, the first in a series called the Inside Scoop on Writing Anything books.

We wrote *How to Write an Effective College Application Essay - The Inside Scoop for Parents* so parents could help prep their children for the essay; it's filled with useful information about the essay's role in the admissions process and practical tips for assisting students on the essays. You might find it valuable, too.

Please let your parents know about the book, and tell them about our free monthly parent chat Q & A webinars. We record them for those who cannot make the chats.

Do you have questions? Want to discuss the essay with colleagues? Join our college essay forums on:

- LinkedIn College Essay Discussion Group
- Facebook College Essay Chat for HS Counselors

Kim Lifton, president of Wow Writing Workshop, is a former journalist who keeps her finger on the pulse of the college admissions industry. A national expert on the college application essay, Lifton blogs for Wow and industry trade publications; she speaks at schools and industry conferences throughout the U.S. Wow is a national company that helps students, professionals and nonprofits handle any writing challenge. High school students use the Wow Method to write application and graduate school admissions essays. Wow also trains professionals who work with students on the college application process. You can reach her at Kim@wowwritingworkshop.com.

Food and CPG Marketing

By Paul Richardson, PhD



Careers in food marketing are exploding due to unprecedented investment and innovation in new food and consumer packaged goods (CPG) products. In fact, the entire food and food processing industry is undergoing transformative change resulting in huge demand for new careers and talent. Of course, the food industry is already one of the largest industries in the United States, comprising about \$2 trillion annually, or roughly 10 percent of U.S. gross domestic product, with over 16.5 million people currently employed. However, the makeup and focus of this industry is in the midst of a revolution, which represents an outstanding opportunity for your students.

Food Incubators and Venture Capital

A growing number of food incubators are funded by venture capital or existing firms to launch new brands. These incubators help entrepreneurs and existing companies manufacture and test new product concepts for distribution and marketing. For example, Impossible Foods is a new plant-based alternative to hamburgers that has received significant venture capital support. National Foodworks Services also provides a variety of services for new food ventures including R&D support.

New Marketing Thinking

The talent of today's millennials is in high demand to formulate new marketing approaches. Today's food products need to deliver excellent value and present a strong brand identity. Clear and clean labels along with peer endorsements are key. Mass media advertising is less important. Instead, social and digital media increasingly drive success.

Older brands are losing market share to new brand concepts that stress new health benefits. For example, firms such as Enjoy Life Foods and Veestro provide a range of brand alternatives that stress natural attributes.

The traditional grocery-store format is also losing market share to new channels such as mass merchandisers, convenience stores, drug stores, and dollar stores. The retail landscape is also changing rapidly. For example, new store concepts such as Mariano's Fresh Markets, which integrates in-store culinary centers, are growing. In addition, direct sales to consumers and e-commerce continue to rise. Recently, Amazon announced that it would market its own brands of perishable goods to compete in the \$100 billion store-brand industry.

New Careers Await You!

For these reasons, new and established companies need help in so many career areas. An undergraduate degree in business or communications is required. An undergraduate degree in food marketing is especially desirable. Starting salaries in food marketing average \$49,610 with a range of opportunities for advancement and many career paths. Here are some examples of careers that could be explored by your student:

- ▶ You may work as a digital media specialist to drive engagement across media and communications
- ▶ You may become an account manager to take charge of high level customer

relationships for success. As a brand manager, you may have the responsibility of nurturing all aspects of brand identity.

- ▶ You may be in charge of market research to spot new trends, to launch new product concepts.
- ▶ You may work in research and development to create new product formulations and attributes.
- ▶ You may manage supply chains to ensure deliveries and coordination of inventory systems.
- ▶ You may work as a nutrition expert to ensure the most healthy benefits.
- ▶ You may manage new retail concepts and store services.
- ▶ You may work in strategic planning to coordinate and manage diverse distribution channels and expansion.



In short, the opportunities in food and CPG marketing are unlimited. It has never been a better or more exciting time to start a career in this industry!

Paul Richardson, PhD, is the Chair of the Food Marketing Program at Niagara University and can be reached via e-mail at psr@niagara.edu.

Sources:

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Average Salary for Industry: Food Manufacturing

http://www.payscale.com/research/US/Industry=Food_Manufacturing/Salary



The background of this section is a warm, golden-yellow and red gradient with a pattern of arches and a brick wall. In the center, the Midwestern State University logo is displayed, featuring a stylized building icon to the left of the text "MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY". Below the logo, the text "Small enough to know your professors, yet large enough to enjoy the full college experience." is written in white. At the bottom right, the website "mwsu.edu" is written in yellow, with "Wichita Falls, Texas" in white below it. Faint, stylized text like "MUSIC" and "WINGS" is visible in the background.

Five Things You Need to Know About the New PreACT

By Vicki Wood



The battle between the ACT and SAT for state-wide testing contracts has been brewing for several years now, causing both the ACT and the College Board to make changes to their tests so that each assessment more accurately aligns with the Common Core State Standards. It was no surprise then that in March of this year, the ACT announced its new PreACT: a practice test designed to compete with the PSAT—the SAT’s precursor exam—to help students prepare for the ACT. While the PreACT and the PSAT serve similar purposes, the two tests are different enough that counselors may question which option is best for their students. Here’s everything you need to know about whether the PreACT is right for your school:

1. It’s great practice for the ACT.

The PreACT is extremely similar to an actual ACT; it uses the same types of questions, the same four-section format, and the same 1-36 scoring scale as the ACT. The only real difference is its length, as the PreACT is an hour shorter than the ACT. Thus, the PreACT is a great pretest for students who plan to take the ACT in their junior or senior year, as the PreACT will essentially provide them with a “before score” and help them pinpoint their areas of weakness. Students also get to keep their test booklets, which will provide powerful review and preparation for the official ACT. So if your state has contracted to provide the ACT to all students, the PreACT seems like a necessary addition to your suite of tests.

2. It’s a stress-free test.

Unlike the PSAT, there are currently no scholarship competitions associated with the PreACT. The PSAT is connected to the National Merit Scholarship Program and a few other organizations that use the test results to bestow merit-based financial awards, so some students experience pressure to perform well and will actually study for PSAT. There is no reason to do so for the PreACT; in fact, we recommend that students who take the PreACT do so without any preparation so that they get an accurate view of their strengths and weaknesses, and can develop a more appropriate study plan for the actual ACT.

Of course, this suggests that elite scholars in ACT-prevalent states should also take the PSAT, even if they have no intention of taking the SAT, in order to potentially qualify for the National Merit Scholarship Program. So it’s important that schools do not eliminate the PSAT if they chose to adopt the PreACT.

3. It’s intended for sophomores in your school.

If students in your high school typically take both the ACT and the SAT, you can offer both the PreACT and PSAT without worrying that you’re asking too much of your students, because the two tests should be given in different years. The PreACT is specifically for sophomores, while the PSAT is designed for juniors (even though many schools encourage sophomores to take the PSAT as well).

At this time, the PreACT is only available to students if their high school is offering the test. Students cannot take the test at another local high school.

4. It can be administered anytime between September and June.

Unlike the PSAT, which has a set testing date in October, the PreACT has a very flexible testing window. The guidelines allow you to administer the test any time between September 1 and June 1, making it a much more convenient option for busy schools. We recommend giving the PreACT in the spring; since students are encouraged to take the ACT in the spring of their junior year, a spring testing date for the PreACT mimics the testing timeline and also provides students with a full year to prepare for the ACT, after receiving their PreACT results.

5. It will include several reports to help both your students and your school.

The PreACT will include an interest inventory

which will generate suggestions for college and career choices for each student who takes the test. Students, parents, and counselors can use this information to tailor academic itineraries or to explore prospective colleges. In addition, the school score report will provide teachers, counselors, and administrators with data to help identify areas of strength and weakness in the curriculum.

While any good educator will be hesitant to add another standardized test to the cadre of assessments forced on their students, the PreACT fills a void and should be considered by schools and districts where the ACT is mandatory or favored by students. This new pretest provides valuable practice for the ACT without the stress and pressure surrounding other college admissions tests, while also supplying valuable data to help students prepare for “the real thing.”

Vicki Wood is with Powerscore Test Preparation. She can answer any questions you have about the SAT or ACT by e-mailing her at vwood@powerscore.com or visiting their website at www.powerscore.com



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The Power of Peer Pressure

By Dawn Marie Barhyte



Sooner or later your students are likely to feel pressure from their friends, will worry about not fitting in and will face some tough decisions due to peer pressure. It may seem formidable, yet they can stay true to their core beliefs and you can help your students identify their limits, work on their coping skills and strengthen their self-confidence by helping them deal with it.

You might be surprised to learn not all peer pressure is negative. Trying on new ideas and values is a part of growing up and fitting in. Our friends are a source of affection, empathy and connection. They can affect how your students dress, act and feel. Positive peer pressure might motivate your students to play sports or study harder. Peer groups are an important part of your student's development and that sense of belonging is what helps them make the transition to independence. When your students start thinking for themselves, their peers have a big impact. So it's actually healthy to rely on their friends more as they move away from their family's influence.

Making decisions is confusing enough for students but when friends get involved and try to pressure them, it can become challenging. If they are like most young people, they worry about what their friends think, want to be liked, to fit in and therefore may be tempted to go along with the group. The notion that "everybody's doing it" may influence your students to leave their common sense behind. It's crucial your students consider what the consequences will be if they go along with the crowd. As counselors, we can help students weigh the pros and cons of going along with their peers. Of course, it's a lot different to decide what hairstyle to

sport than whether or not to smoke, drink alcohol or experiment with drugs. Although it may be a powerful struggle to think that they might be left behind and the pull to fit in is difficult to withstand, the way they choose to respond to peer pressure defines them as individuals. It's our job to help them weigh in on the possible consequences. In fact, the decisions they make say a lot about what kind of person they are and how they feel about themselves. And while it can be a challenge to walk away from negative peer pressure, it's doable to stay on track. By helping students pay attention to their feelings and values about what's right and wrong, you can help them determine the right road. Inner strength and self-confidence can help teens stand their ground and resist doing something their heart tells them is wrong. We need to reassure our students that it's part of maturing to learn to make sound decisions based on what is best for us, and not because of going along to fit in.

If we see students struggling, we can help them before they go along with the crowd. We can help them to consider the consequences of making negative personal choices and let them know the way they choose to respond will have an impact on their life. When we counsel, we need to make students see that saying no or resisting the persuasive power of peer pressure isn't painless, but help them keep in mind good friend's respect them and their individuality. To be successful they need to stand their ground and it doesn't mean their friends will turn their back on them, they may even respect them more because they stick to their convictions. It's our job to instill that daring to be different is actually cool. The power of peer pressure can be strong but our students are



stronger. Ask your students this: do you want to be a leader or a follower?

Have your students take this quiz to see if they can handle negative peer pressure, then brainstorm together to find better ways to cope. Let them know it's critical to answer honestly to see how strong they are and if they are able to be successful.

- Do I hang around with friends who share the same healthy values as me?
- Have I identified long-term goals so I can stay focused when hit with the hard sell?
- Have I considered that at risk behaviors will have an impact on my life?
- Have I identified those negative behaviors I will not take part in?
- Am I strong enough to say “No way” firmly and consistently?
- Can I simply avoid those people who can tempt me into doing things that are

unhealthy?

- Is a sense of belonging so powerful that I need to do anything to achieve it?
- Am I mature enough to use decision making that is positive?
- Do I have a need to escape reality?
- Do I care enough about myself to make healthy choices?

Here are ten tips to help your students tackle peer pressure

- Remind them to walk away from dangerous situations.
- Encourage them to hang out with friends who share the same values and positive attitudes.
- Coach them to set goals and stay focused.
- Help them realize that everything they do will have an impact on their future.
- Communicate that students shouldn't compare themselves to others – you'll never measure up!
- Tell kids to use humor when saying no!
- Help teens realize that they are the ones who have to live with the consequences of their actions.
- Steer them to join positive extracurricular activities like youth groups, sports and clubs or take up a hobby, volunteer or a part time job.
- Be the devil's advocate so that they listen to their conscience and decide for themselves what they think is right and wrong.
- Always communicate that if they're finding it difficult to handle negative peer pressure, to talk to someone they trust such as an older sibling, a favorite teacher, guidance counselor or coach.

Dawn Marie Barhyte is a widely published freelance writer and former educator who continues to touch lives of young people through her writing.

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The collaboration conundrum

By Jim Paterson



It helps all parties when counseling offices collaborate with outside services to benefit students, but it doesn't always happen. Here's why – and here are some solutions

It only seems to make sense for schools and school counseling offices to coordinate their efforts with local community resources, joining like-minded people with similar goals and often the same clients. A win, win, win.

The reality is, however, that often these connections are lacking, although some experts are beginning to spotlight reasons for the gap and develop solutions that range from structures for developing a simple database of services -- to district-wide programs that include all players.

“I think one of my biggest concerns is the coordination of services,” says Eric R. Blanco, president of the California Association of School Counselors and a counselor at Ernest Righetti High School in Santa Maria, CA, who notes that while he believes such cooperation should be undertaken carefully, it should be a priority since it can expand a busy counselor's reach.

At a time when counselors are being asked to take on a variety of additional responsibilities, and caseloads have climbed to an average of about 470:1 nationwide and sometimes as high as 1000:1, finding other resources seems like a good option.

It can range from working with a service that provide clothing, food or refurbished computers to finding emergency services for a family in crisis or therapy for a struggling student. One recent

effort, growing out of a program to help Gulf state educators in the wake of devastation by Hurricane Katrina, has spread and shown considerable success by connecting schools with the community to improve student success. (see sidebar)

There are several reasons why although this connection is seen as critical – it isn't made nearly enough, according to experts:

- Busy counselors sometimes just can't find the time to seek out community services.
- Varied and shifting resources sometimes change at the whim of a different administration in the county government or White House, or when personnel on either side changes.
- Counselors are wary of making connections to programs they don't know well – and, again, the vetting process can take time. “As a school counselor, I definitely want a variety of resources and services available to my students, but it is very important that these services are appropriate,” Blanco says.
- Either side may be protective of the services they offer and the method of delivery. There can be competition for clients – or funding.
- Schools may be wary of liability related to recommending, endorsing or partnering with other services.

- A lack of understanding about schools – or, on the part of educators, about what health, social service or recreation programs do.

Getting started

Dana Griffin, a former counselor and now a professor training school counselors at University of North Carolina and specializing in school-community relations, says counselors need to take the time to develop these relations, but start slowly.

She has studied community resource “mapping” as a solution. “It is an effort to address how school counselors can be proactive in finding services for the schools while simultaneously laying the foundation for school-family-community partnerships,” she says. “School counselors must collaborate with stakeholders to optimize the academic, career, and personal development of their students. They can no longer function in isolation from the community.”

The idea, she says, is to bring representatives together and collect information about all the services available in the area – then come up with a structure that makes the information accessible, accurate and up-to-date.

That, counselors say, takes time initially and especially on an ongoing basis when information needs to change. “It may feel like a time-intensive task, but the key is to start small,” says Griffin, suggesting that existing lists be combined and representatives each be tasked with keeping the list current.

In some communities the local government has taken on the role. School counseling offices also can sometimes use interns or student service time to initiate and update the database. Other schools have partnered with local colleges, and gotten students involved who are studying social work or counseling. In one Maryland school district a roundtable with representatives from social service groups and schools meet monthly to discuss general strategies and specific student needs.

And often a resource fair can help – to make the information available and to bring the groups together initially.

- The Fayette, GA, County School Counselors Association sponsored a community resource fair, and then put details about each of the



participants and other resources online, using the fair to develop the service database. To make certain that such events become a resource for ongoing improvement to the communications between participants, one counselor is sometimes appointed to gather information from participants at the fair – about their services and other programs they are aware of. The information is put into a database and posted on the school Web site and promoted in the school and community along with an invitation for additions to the list.

- At Hathaway Elementary School in Washougal, WA, such a fair for school parents was initiated this year, with hopes it will expand to include other schools in the district. About 65 parents attended. “I had no idea how many great resources were in this community,” Jessica Hooper, who has two children in the school, told a local newspaper.
- George Washington High School in Denver encouraged parent participation in a resource fair by offering dinner and a raffle for a bicycle.
- The San Diego Unified School District Counseling and Guidance Department has partnered with the San Diego Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention to host an annual community resource fair that was aimed at persons concerned about gangs but it was open to all families. “Connecting and collaborating is vital to best serve students and their families, now more than ever,” says Melissa Janak, head of the district counseling office.
- Broward County, FL, schools also held a resource fair for a specific population – students with learning differences – but found it provided information for all students and their families.
- Hudson, NH, schools held an event to

provide information to families whose students were attending early learning programs so they could make connections early in the student's career with the school system. Others have held them for students going into middle school.

- Battle Ground (WA) High School focused on resources related to student and family health at an event this spring, with representatives also offering information about fitness and nutrition, mentoring services and group and individual counseling programs.

In some cases, community involvement in the school raises concerns with counselors – who are worried about school systems utilizing outside services, which might change counselor responsibilities or allow schools to cut budgets designed for counseling departments. But Griffin says that using services such as outside therapists should be done carefully.

“This is an issue that has divided the field. I do believe in the value of having mental health counselors offer sessions at school as a way to provide necessary services to clients unable to afford the cost of therapy. However, I believe that school counselors can also provide mental health services for students without identified DSM diagnoses. They know the students and their families.”

She also says that she believes schools benefit from having police officers, though their presence concerns some parents and educators. Counselors sometimes find their duties overlap, or their philosophy about students clash with the counseling office. But Griffin says counselors may be able to change some of their work with youth.

“Police officers could learn alternative approaches to dealing with students who are demonstrating negative behavior if that is a problem, for example,” she says.

Griffin says in either case it takes good communications and an administration willing to establish boundaries. She also says that often the best results come from a personal connection. “Often times, we try to find ways to partner with whole businesses and organizations, but counselors, who are trained in relationship building, should always start with the individual connections and then work up.”

STORM SURGE

One approach to school-community collaboration was born after a crisis – and has grown and proven its value beyond the area where it took shape in the wake of an enormous natural disaster.

“Rebuilding for Learning” was developed to help schools devastated by Hurricane Katrina and other storms in 2005, putting together a comprehensive plan for them internally and in connection with community and other resources.

The blueprint for the successful effort has now been put to use in other school districts outside that region with great success, says Howard Adelman, a UCLA professor and co-director of the School Mental Health Project and Center for Mental Health in Schools, which co-sponsors the program with the publishing and media company Scholastic. Linda Taylor, also a UCLA professor, is co-director of the project.

“Currently, there is not a system for most schools. Rather, there is a variety of school staff involved with student and learning supports and some resources from the community on some school campuses” Adelman says.

Adelman and Taylor say there are a wide variety of existing student supports, costing a lot and using skilled professionals who want to make a difference.

“There are pockets of excellence. However, it has been widely recognized that interventions and the infrastructure for organizing and operating them are highly fragmented and often redundant,” Taylor says. They serve too few students, and often unsuccessfully, she notes.

Structures that Adelman and Taylor have suggested are getting excellent reviews from Gainesville, GA, schools, where the district increased its graduation rate by 15 percent, decreased chronic absenteeism from more than 20 percent to five percent and cut disciplinary measures dramatically and bus referrals in half.

Randy Nelson, superintendent of the School District of La Crosse, WI, says the Rebuilding for Learning approach has raised the level of services provided by both the school and community programs for La Crosse students

“Our overall goal is to provide more than just a ‘safety net,’ a hackneyed phrase we use many times

to describe the general work that we do in the community to support students and their families,” Nelson says. “I contend, however, that a ‘safety net’ is no longer sufficient to meet the needs of our community’s children. We need a trampoline.”

In Bloomington, IN, schools are using the comprehensive system of learning supports and administrators say this has been effective, although it was just implemented two years ago “It unifies and moves student supports away from reacting to problems toward system development with a strong emphasis on prevention and early intervention,” Superintendent Les Fujitake said in an interview by a local paper.

Adelman says there are several key areas that schools must focus on to tackle these barriers to learning

- Setting policy to “fully integrate, as primary and essential,” a classroom and school-wide, comprehensive student and learning supports component. He says it must be part of the school improvement planning.
- Reworking the operational infrastructure to ensure effective daily implementation of the system.
- Enhancing approaches for systemic change in ways that ensure effective implementation, replication to scale, and sustainability.

“Student and learning supports in the community need to be understood as more than a set of services and certainly more than clinical services,” he says. “They are the resources, strategies, and practices that provide physical, social, emotional, and intellectual supports to enable all students to have success at school.”

And counselors, he says, can play a key role because they know services in the school and community best – and know the needs of their school’s students. They can connect all three.

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites, based in Lewes, DE.



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10 Occupations Your Students can Consider after CTE

By Rebecca Vander Meulen



Career and Technical schools can prepare students for some of the fastest growing jobs in the United States. Here are summaries of 10 of them, as detailed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook.

1. Physical therapist aides

- Median salary: \$25,120
- Growth outlook: 40 percent by 2024

A physical therapist aide works for a physical therapist, who helps patients who have trouble with pain or mobility. Typical duties include setting up and cleaning equipment, helping patients get to therapy areas, and assisting in running the therapist's office. Their jobs keep them on their feet during much of the work day. A high school diploma is enough to get into the field, but career training in health care is a big advantage. Physical therapy aides need compassion for patients and the ability to get along with people.

2. Occupational therapy aides

- Median salary: \$27,800
- Growth outlook: 40 percent by 2024

Occupational therapy aides work for occupational therapists, who help people with the skills they need to complete everyday tasks. Aides set up and clean equipment, help patients with medical paperwork, and take on some office management tasks. A high school diploma is sufficient to enter the field, but training and experience in health care helps a job applicant stand out. Occupational therapy aides

need customer service skills and the ability to empathize with patients.

3. Home health aides

- Median salary: \$21,920
- Growth outlook: 38 percent by 2024

People with serious illnesses and physical impairments often want to live at home instead of in nursing facilities. Home health aides visit patients in their homes and help with tasks like cooking, basic housekeeping, and taking medication. They watch over their clients' health and keep their supervisors updated on patients' progress. Training in health care, such as in a high-school career training program, is an advantage on the job. Home health aides need to be trustworthy and able to connect with people.

4. Solar voltaic installers

- Median salary: \$37,830
- Growth outlook: 24 percent by 2024

With so many people looking for ways to reduce their carbon footprint, solar panels are sprouting on roofs and in fields across the country. Solar voltaic workers build these panels and install and maintain them. High school graduates can enter this field and receive on-the-job training, but coursework at a community college or technical school is a big advantage. Apprenticeships are another option. Physical stamina and mechanical aptitude are highly valued, along with customer service skills and attention to detail.

5. Nursing assistants and orderlies

- Median salary: \$25,710
- Growth outlook: 17 percent by 2024

Nursing assistants have close contact with patients in hospitals and nursing homes. They help patients with basic tasks like eating, getting dressed, bathing, and getting into and out of bed. They also measure vital signs like blood pressure. Orderlies have similar tasks and are often in charge of cleaning and changing linens. In many states, high-school career and technical programs are considered sufficient training to enter the field. This work requires kindness, patience, and communication skills.

6. Masonry workers

- Median salary: \$39,640
- Growth outlook: 15 percent by 2024

Brick, stone and concrete are becoming more common in new and renovated buildings. Masons are the skilled workers who put these materials in place. They specialize in different areas, like terrazzo masons who build decorative parts of buildings or bricklayers who build walls and chimneys. Most masonry workers begin as apprentices, and vocational education in high school is an advantage. They need the strength to carry heavy loads, math abilities, hand-eye coordination, and a close eye for detail.

7. Electricians

- Median salary: \$51,880
- Growth outlook: 14 percent by 2024

Modern life depends on electrical power. Electricians are the professionals who install electrical systems in new buildings and maintain them in existing buildings. They find the source of the problem when electricity isn't working correctly and determine how to fix it. Some specialize in home electrical systems and others work in factories and other businesses. Most electricians start out in apprenticeship programs. Completing a training program in high school can make that apprenticeship shorter, so new electricians can start working on their own more quickly. Electricians must be skilled at thinking through problems and have the stamina for physically demanding work.

8. Heating, air conditioning, and

refrigeration mechanics and installers

- Median salary: \$45,110
- Growth outlook: 14 percent by 2024

Everyone in a building is uncomfortable when something is wrong with the air – if it's too hot, too cold, or of poor quality. Those who install and maintain climate-control and ventilation systems make sure homes and businesses can live and work in comfort. They also assess a system's energy efficiency and find ways to make it run better. Career training programs for high school students provide training for entry-level jobs. Learning about plumbing and electrical work will help a new technician stand out. This work requires an aptitude for mechanics, problem-solving abilities and skill in math.

9. Insulation workers

- Median salary: \$38,630
- Growth outlook: 13 percent by 2024

Good insulation is important for keeping buildings comfortable and energy-efficient. Insulation specialists figure out which insulation is needed and install it. They also remove old insulation from buildings that are being renovated. Some workers spend most of their days inside, while others spend time outside. While a high school diploma is enough to enter the field, apprenticeships are a common form of on-the-job training. Insulation workers need to be able to work in confined spaces, know how to use power tools, and be skilled in math.

10. Skincare specialists

- Median salary: \$30,090
- Growth outlook: 12 percent by 2024

The American population is getting older, and many people want to look young. This is good for skincare specialists. They give treatments such as facials, masks and scrubs. They also recommend skincare products to their clients. Skincare specialists work in salons, spas and medical offices. Training in a cosmetology or esthetician program is needed to get into the field. Skincare specialists need to be good at customer service, along with keeping their work environments neat and sanitary.

Rebecca VanderMeulen has written and contributed to NextStepU, Education.com, The Philadelphia Inquirer, and many other print and online outlets.

CONFERENCE	LOCATION	DATE
Atlanta Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Cobb Energy Performing Arts Centre (New Location)	Monday, October 10: 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
Nashville Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Vanderbilt University- Student Life Center	Thursday, October 13: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Jacksonville National College Fair	Prime F. Osborn III Convention Center	Saturday, October 15: 9 a.m.-1 p.m.
South Florida National College Fair	Ft. Lauderdale/Broward County Convention Center	Sunday, October 16: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
St. Louis National College Fair	Saint Louis University - Simon Recreation Center	Sunday, October 16: 1 p.m.-4 p.m.
Baltimore National College Fair	Baltimore Convention Center	Monday, October 17: 9 a.m.-noon; 6 p.m.-8 p.m. Tuesday, October 18: 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
Baton Rouge National College Fair	Baton Rouge River Center	Monday, October 17: 9 a.m.-noon; 6:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m.
Honolulu National College Fair	Hawaii Convention Center	Tuesday, October 18: 8:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m.; 5 p.m.-8 p.m.
Boise National College Fair	Expo Idaho	Tuesday, October 18: 9 a.m.-2 p.m.; 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
New Orleans National College Fair	Pontchartrain Convention & Civic Center	Tuesday, October 18: 9 a.m.-noon; 6 p.m.-8 p.m.
Ft. Lauderdale Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Dillard Center for the Arts	Tuesday, October 18: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
New York City Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Jacob K. Javits Convention Center	Wednesday, October 19: 6 p.m.-9 p.m.
San Diego Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Del Mar Fairgrounds – Exhibit Hall (New Location)	Thursday, October 20: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Los Angeles Performing And Visual Arts Fair	University of California, Los Angeles - Ackerman Union	Saturday, October 22: 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m.
Portland National College Fair	Oregon Convention Center	Sunday, October 23: 1 p.m.-5 p.m. Monday, October 24: 9 a.m.-noon
San Francisco Performing And Visual Arts Fair	South San Francisco Conference Center	Sunday, October 23: 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
Portland Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Portland Art Museum - Mark Building	Monday, October 24: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Seattle Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Seattle Center - Fisher Pavilion	Tuesday, October 25: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.

CONFERENCE	LOCATION	DATE
Las Vegas Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Las Vegas Academy of the Arts	Wednesday, October 26: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Boston Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Boston University - Fuller Building	Thursday, October 27: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Philadelphia Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Pennsylvania Convention Center	Saturday, October 29: 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
Denver Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Infinity Park Event Center	Sunday, October 30: 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
Houston Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Rice University - Alice Pratt Brown Hall	Tuesday, November 1: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
Dallas Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Irving Convention Center	Thursday, November 3: 7 p.m.-9 p.m.
San Francisco STEM College and Career Fair	South San Francisco Conference Center	Sunday, November 6: 11:00 a.m.-2:30 p.m.
Austin Performing And Visual Arts Fair	AISD Performing Arts Center (New Fair)	Sunday, November 6: 1 p.m.-3 p.m.
Washington D.C. Performing And Visual Arts Fair	Walter E. Washington Convention Center	Sunday, November 6: 1 p.m.-3:30 p.m.

Please check with show organizer to confirm dates, location and times or for further information



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Best Community College Programs Near You—Part 2

By Lee Koslow

In a previous issue we discussed the community colleges with the best programs in four select states. There are a number of lists highlighting the best two-year, public colleges in general. Here is a list of excellent community college programs by region. This time we are focusing on programs outside California, Florida, New York, and Texas, which we covered last time.

Space does not allow for mention of all of the notable programs at the more than 1,100 US community colleges. Therefore this list focuses on majors that will give your students skills and credentials leading to employment in demand occupations.

EAST

Lancaster, Pennsylvania

Associate Degree, Electro-Mechanical Technology, Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology: High starting salary due to mechatronics being one of the newest, most sought after skill sets among manufacturers. The college has a high graduation plus transfer rate.

Lincroft, New Jersey

A.A.S., Radiologic Technology, Brookdale Community College: Very high job placement rate in a high-paying, demand occupation in the health care field. A good job for someone who wants to learn technical skills and still have patient contact. Award-winning faculty.

Boston, Massachusetts

A.S., Biology, Bunker Hill Community College: Choose between the biotechnology option for immediate employment and the biology transfer option to continue on with a four-year degree at one of several UMass schools. Opportunity for paid, summer internships at top companies through the college's Learn and Earn program.

Berlin, New Hampshire

A.S., Environmental Science, White Mountains Community College: This program, which prepares students for transfer to a four-year college, offers many opportunities for field work and research. Good career direction for students who are concerned about environmental issues.

Hagerstown, Maryland

A.A.S., Advanced Manufacturing Systems, Hagerstown Community College: Provides a broad skill set in an industry with reported talent shortages. Courses are taught by faculty with manufacturing experience. The college has a relatively high graduation plus transfer rate.

NORTH

Sheldon, Iowa

A.A.S., Automotive Service Technology, Northwest Iowa Community College: Award-winning automotive service program with 75% of time spent in hands-on learning. Featured on several best community colleges lists, with a high graduation, plus transfer rate.

Ina, Illinois

A.A.S., Agriculture, Rend Lake College: Options in agricultural business, mechanics, and production & management. Some students receive dual or even triple majors. College is featured on several best community colleges lists.

Beloit, Kansas

A.D., Nursing, Eastern North Central Kansas Technical College: Degree in a demand occupation with a high starting salary. Good career ladder incorporated into the program—students can become licensed as an LPN after the first year of study, and then as an RN upon graduation. College is featured on several best community college lists.

Flint, Michigan

A.A.S., Electronics and Electrical Technology, Mott Community College: This degree program, housed in the college's new Regional Technology Center, trains students for growing, demand occupations. Apprenticeship opportunities may be available through local companies. Award-winning college noted for innovative instructional practices.

Rochester, Minnesota

Advanced Nursing Assistant Hospital Certificate, Rochester Community and Technical College: This 16-credit college certificate program prepares graduates for immediate employment as a nursing assistant with many opportunities available at Mayo Clinic hospitals. This certificate provides a career ladder to surgical technology, practical nursing, and registered nursing programs.

SOUTH

Petersburg, Virginia

A.S. Degree for transfer to a four-year Virginia College, Richard Bland College of William & Mary: The college has articulation agreements with 38 different programs at many four-year institutions, making it an excellent value for the first two years of a bachelor's degree. Relatively high graduation plus transfer rate.

Smithfield, North Carolina

Associate Degree, Paralegal Technology, Johnston Community College: Popular program in a growing, demand occupation. The college is an institutional member of the American Association for Paralegal Education. High graduation plus transfer rate.

Spruce Pine, North Carolina

A.D., Nursing, Mayland Community College: Degree in a demand occupation with a high starting salary. This school has a reputation for teaching soft skills in addition to technical education. College is featured on several best community colleges lists.

SOUTH

Rainsville, Alabama

A.A.S., Industrial Electronics, Northeast Alabama Community College: Degree in a growing, demand occupation in the manufacturing sector. Electrical and electronics engineering technicians has the most projected job openings, statewide, of any technician-level occupation in the engineering job family. College is featured on several best community colleges lists.

Minden, Louisiana

A.A.S., Industrial Instrumentation Technology, Northwest Louisiana Technical College: This degree prepares graduates for high-skill jobs with increased demand due to changing technology and growing skill shortages among manufacturers. Relatively high graduation plus transfer rate.

WEST

Ephraim, Utah

A.S., Elementary Education, Snow College: Popular program with option to transfer to several four-year colleges to complete a bachelor's degree. Utah is projected to have an ongoing need for elementary school teachers. College appears on several best community colleges lists.

Walla Walla, Washington

A.A.A.S., Diesel Technology, Walla Walla Community College: Training for an occupation that requires a specialized skill set. Graduates will have the skills required for repairing heavy trucks, agricultural, logging, and mining equipment. College has a relatively high graduation plus transfer rate and has topped multiple best community college lists.

Rock Springs, Wyoming

A.S., Engineering, Western Wyoming Community College: This degree provides the first two years for transfer to a bachelor's degree in engineering at a four-year college. Class sizes are small with more individual attention than at a typical four-year institution. Award-winning faculty and a high graduation plus transfer rate.

Mesa, Arizona

A.A.S., Networking System Administration, Mesa Community College: This pathways oriented program includes opportunities to obtain industry-recognized certifications while pursuing the degree. Students may specialize in Linux administration or Cisco networking technology. Graduates are prepared for high-growth occupations with good salaries.

Trinidad, Colorado

A.D., Nursing, Trinidad State Junior College: Degree in a demand occupation with a high starting salary. Good career ladder incorporated into the program—students can exit as an LPN, return to complete the associate degree, or dually enroll in a four-year college to obtain a bachelor's degree in nursing. Relatively high graduation plus transfer rate.

Helpful Resources for You and Your Transfer Students

CCC Transfer Counselor Website: www.ccctransfer.org

The Transfer Counselor Website (TCW) is a one-stop repository of resources and tools for California's community college counselors. Has some great resources that will be of use to Counselors anywhere in the US

CollegeTransfer.Net: <https://www.collegetransfer.net/>

Designed for your students, has tools to search, find and compare Colleges & Universities. Tool to review transfer policies at more than 1,200 schools.

College Confidential: <http://talk.collegeconfidential.com/transfer-students/>

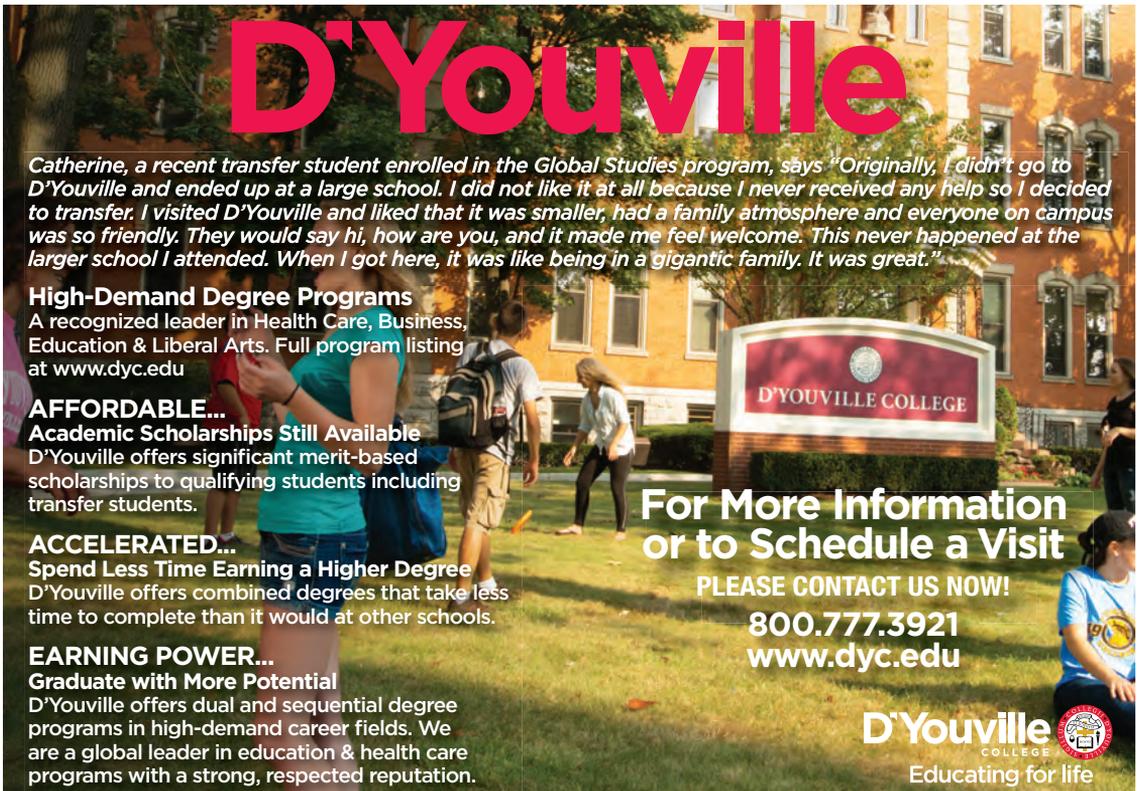
Forum with posts and comments from actual students on their transfer experiences

Transferology: <https://www.transferology.com/index.htm>

A nation-wide network designed to help students explore their college transfer options. Students can answer the question "Will my courses transfer?" by adding coursework, exams, and/or military learning experiences to see how many schools in the Transferology network have matching courses that may be awarded when they transfer.

Scholarships.com: <https://www.scholarships.com/financial-aid/college-scholarships/scholarships-by-type/transfer-scholarships/>

Follow the link to find scholarships only available to Transfer Students



D'Youville

Catherine, a recent transfer student enrolled in the Global Studies program, says "Originally, I didn't go to D'Youville and ended up at a large school. I did not like it at all because I never received any help so I decided to transfer. I visited D'Youville and liked that it was smaller, had a family atmosphere and everyone on campus was so friendly. They would say hi, how are you, and it made me feel welcome. This never happened at the larger school I attended. When I got here, it was like being in a gigantic family. It was great."

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8 Tips to Make the College Transfer Process Easier

By Liz Funk



Who doesn't enjoy surfing the web or clicking through Pinterest boards, looking at helpful "life hacks" to make projects easier? Great news: transfer students can also use clever tips to "hack" the college transfer process and increase the likeliness of gaining admission. To use these accessible strategies, the only thing a student needs is an internet connection and some moxie.

1. Identify schools with a lower retention rate.

A college's retention rate is the number of students who return from one academic year to the next. A college with a lower retention rate will have more spots to fill in their sophomore, junior, and senior classes, which may improve transfer students' chances of gaining admission. However, they should be sure to ask current students during campus visits about what the atmosphere is like, so they can rule out any problems that a college or university may have that has led to their lower retention rate.

2. School up on academic departments.

Says Laurie Martin, Director of College Admissions Consulting at Stratus Prep, a test prep and admissions consulting firm in New York City, "I had a client who wanted to change his major from Engineering to Economics. While he was already at a great school, he was able to make the case that the transfer university had a very strong economics program. He referenced certain courses he wanted to take and how they fit with his grad school aspirations. He also discussed the location of the school and its proximity to internship opportunities, which were lacking at his old school." When students show they've done their research and they tailor their ap-

plication materials accordingly, they stand out.

3. Make relationships in the Admissions Office.

"It's essential to build a relationship with the transfer admissions officer at the 4-year school," says Nancy Sanchez, Executive Director of the Kaplan Educational Foundation. Students can introduce themselves via phone, email, or in person during a campus visit. "Having this relationship will give your application an edge. This demonstrates commitment, allows a student to engage and follow-up, and allows the student to evaluate the school and get in touch with transfer students to get to know the community they aspire to join and see if it is a good fit," says Sanchez.

4. Students planning on having an alumni interview can ask to interview with an alum who was also a transfer.

Having an immediate commonality with the interviewer will help students build rapport and give them something to talk about. Also, because the interviewer has been in the same situation (trying to transfer into this specific school) and remembers what it was like, he or she may be more likely to root for the student and recommend a favorable admissions decision.

5. Speak the school's language.

When students are writing their essays, they need to communicate that they are a strong culture fit. They can do that by studying the school's web-site and visiting campus. "You need to develop your reasons for wanting this school through research, self-reflection, and visiting the campus if pos-

sible, and you need to connect those reasons to the cultural values of that school,” says Martin. Then, when students work on their essays, they can write as though they are halfway in the door and are conversant in the campus culture.

6. Students can talk to their current advisor and find out if anyone has recently transferred to one of their target schools.

If students can find out if anyone from their current college has transferred to one of their target schools, the student would be in a fortunate situation. Students can reach out to these successful transfers and ask them to share their experience transferring to their new colleges. Students can also gain valuable information to customize their personal essays. After building a relationship, students can also ask this person if they will write a recommendation letter; most colleges accept peer recommendation letters, and it doesn't hurt if it comes from a current student with a similar trajectory.

7. If something sets a student apart, the student should find a way to share it.

Has the student published poetry? Or raced in a half-marathon? Or started a small business in lieu of looking for a summer job? If so, he or she should

find a way to tell that story in their applications and do so with supplemental application materials. “Being able to see the talents and accomplishments of the transfer student makes them seem more like a real person and not just a piece of paper,” says Elizabeth Venturini, a college admissions and career coach based in California. “Applicants should make their enhancements as fast and as easy to access as possible, in the format requested by the college.” So, either print materials out or format them into an elegant PDF.

8. Students can demonstrate that they will hit the ground running.

“Community involvement is key. Four year schools want to make sure that a student will be able to integrate into the community,” says Sanchez. She says students should “provide examples of being involved, whether that’s supporting a family, having a leadership role at school, taking on responsibilities at work, or volunteering—leadership and community engagement comes in many forms.” If students draw a blank, they should consider volunteering at a Habitat for Humanity build. Or, you can point them in the direction of your college’s Office of Community Engagement where students can learn about local volunteer opportunities.



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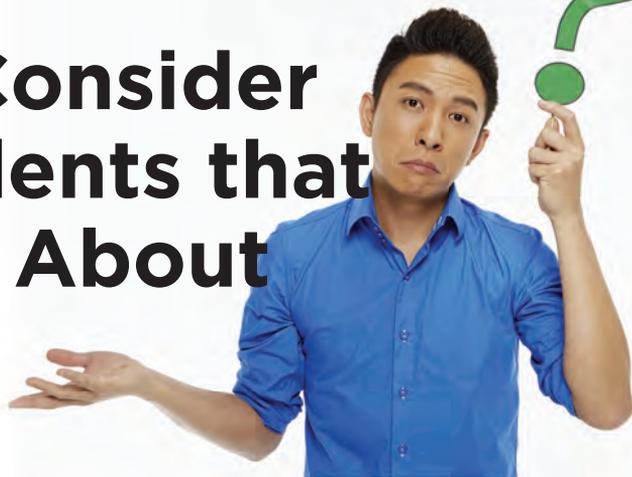
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4 Things to Consider for Your Students that Are Thinking About Transferring



By Brittany Maschal

The University of Not-New-Jersey was my dream school, or so I thought.

By the time Thanksgiving break rolled around, I had already made three visits home, was 99 percent sure my roommate who cried every single day would not be returning after winter break, and had eaten enough cafeteria food to make me crave my mother's not-so-great-but-better-than-cafeteria-food meals. I also knew something needed to change before my grades started to sink alongside my spirits. What if the University of Not-New-Jersey isn't my dream school; what if my dream school is out there waiting for me to find it? Maybe if I transfer I will be happier, and everything will fall into place—and I will eat better, too. My grades, thankfully, were the only bright side to my college experience at the time—maybe I could even get into a better school. That would make me happier! Win-win!

For some students, transferring after freshman year is the right move; most students in this position are those who have ended up somewhere as a stepping stone en route to where they initially wanted to be, so going into first semester freshman year, expectations are not as high. But what I also know now is that transferring is not always the answer that gets the desired outcome; sometimes changing schools is not the answer because the grass is not always greener on another campus; sometimes it is just you that needs to change. What's more, the process of transferring is often more complicated, time-consuming, and unsuccessful than one thinks.

Here are four things students (and their counselors) should consider when thinking about transferring:

-Has the student given his or herself enough time to get used to college—to making the transition from high school academics and living with their parents to the rigors of college level academic work and everything that comes along with being responsible for themselves? Chances are, if your student is in their first semester of college, they have not. Give it some time, seriously! Big life transitions take time to navigate; students may not get into their groove or find their way quickly, but they will with time. Four out of the approximately five students per year that contact me about transferring end up not even applying to transfer because they go back to school for spring semester and a few weeks or so into it begin to find their way. I often hear “Things aren't so bad here at [insert name of school], in fact, things are actually good!” and the topic of transferring becomes an afterthought. Students may need time to think about why they are really unhappy and if transferring is warranted. They should talk to their friends, family members, or a counselor at school to talk it out.

-Are their grades better, worse, or the same as they were in high school? If their grades have gotten better or stayed the same, good for them. If they have gotten worse, transferring may not be as easy as they think. Most schools will place emphasis on their grades in college although they will still require them to send their high school transcript and in most cases, standardized test scores. So if their grades have dropped or they did very poorly their



first semester, the schools where they are applying may have less confidence in their ability to do well at their institution. Yes, your students reasoning may be that they are unhappy with their current situation, or the school is not a good match, which has caused their grades to drop, but that does not excuse them from performing well academically. By doing well freshman year despite not feeling all that great about where they are—and not the other way around— they increase the likelihood of being admitted as a transfer student. If they plan on transferring to a school that is less selective than their current institution, then it may not be a huge issue, but if they plan on trying to transfer to a similar school or one that is more selective, make sure their grades are where they need to be. I have spoken to a number of students who wish to transfer but have not done well (C's, some F's, or some W's on the transcript) and are unaware that their grades will matter, or are surprised to hear that some schools where they got in as freshmen may now not admit them as transfers. The same standard applies for transfers and freshmen at most schools, so they should do their research and know what they are up against before getting too excited about the prospect of getting out.

-Transferring may mean not graduating in exactly four years—is your student okay with this? Some students are fine with taking some extra summer classes or staying on campus an extra semester while others are not (for a host of reasons, one reason being the added cost). Transfer of credits is not a seamless process, so they could lose a few by changing schools. The potential to lose credits is something else they should research ahead of

time and must take into consideration if the time to obtain a degree is important to them.

-Applying to transfer has costs: time, money, and lots of energy—are they ready to apply to college, again? The transfer process is almost identical to the freshman application process at most schools. Writing essays, ordering transcripts, asking for letters of recommendation, getting forms from your high school, college advisors and Registrar, filling out the dreaded Common Application (in some cases)—fun for some, not so fun for many, but all part of the process of transferring. Your student managed through it once, so they are undoubtedly able to do it again, but do they have the time, money and energy to do so and do it well?

The above was a light rendering of my thought process a mere two months into my freshman year of college way back in the day. And now, as an independent educational consultant, I know that I was not alone in feeling out of place, disconnected, and itching to feel right at home immediately upon starting my college journey. College is some of the best four (sometimes five or six) years of your students lives, and sometimes it sucks at first—and that is not uncommon. They should give it some time, work hard in their courses, get active socially and talk to others. They may soon realize that they are just fine where they are, and things are pretty awesome after all.

Dr. Maschal worked in admissions and student services at a number of Universities including Princeton, UPenn and JHU, and is the Founder of B. Maschal Educational Consulting (brittany.consulting).



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Transfer Agreements

How Two-Year Colleges Ease the Transfer Process to Partner College

By Liz Funk

Many two-year colleges—and even some four-year colleges—have written agreements with nearby four year schools, outlining what courses and credits will transfer, so that two-year college graduates can transfer as full-time juniors, ready to hit the ground running. Says Rosemary Schultz, an academic advisor and professor at Hudson Valley Community College in Troy, New York, “Transfer agreements—also called articulation agreements—don’t guarantee admission, but they do establish that the courses taken will transfer and the credit will transfer.” Read on to learn more about transfer agreements and how they save time, money, and energy for students.

1. Two-year college students should share their plans with their advisor early in the game.

Community college and junior college students who know where they want to transfer after two years are in a terrific position, as they can follow a curriculum that will fully transfer to their four-year college of choice. When should students meet with an advisor to discuss? “The sooner the better,” says Schultz. It can be part of the conversation when a student and advisor are making the fall semester schedule for freshman year. “We tailor their program as much as possible to match their goals when they leave. So if I know that a student wants to go to a certain four year college where we have an articulation agreement, we’ll match their courses exactly to that college.”

2. If students are undecided about their major or where they want to transfer after two years, they can still benefit

from articulation agreements.

“If a student is still exploring their options and are taking liberals arts or general studies coursework, then more than likely these credits will transfer into a general education curriculum at a four year liberal arts college,” says Bertrand Poirier, Senior Associate Director of Admissions at Keene State College in Keene, New Hampshire. Students who are undecided about their plans should focus on completing their general education requirements that tend to be consistent across most programs and colleges. Once students have chosen a major and chosen to apply for transfer to a college that has an articulation agreement with their current school, an advisor can help them assess which classes they still need to take to transfer and enter as a full-time junior.

3. Articulation agreements mean that two-year colleges and four-year colleges are working as a team.

“Articulation agreements with our community college partners ensures that students’ credits will transfer and they will count toward the degree they wish to pursue at the four year school,” says Jen Sloan, the transfer advisor and associate director of admission at Siena College in Loudonville, New York. “Working closely with the community college advising staff is also key as well as the community college transfer office. The community colleges offer several resources to students, and those students should take advantage of what the school can offer them.” Says Poirier, “Ultimately it is a joint effort on the part of the two institutions.”

4. Transfer agreements reduce student stress and save students money.

Says Rosemary Schultz, “The articulation agreement may identify specific math classes a student should take or certain electives they need to satisfy the general education requirement. These are all specifically defined. When there’s a transfer agreement, students know what they need to transfer. They don’t need to worry about it. It’s a clear, defined plan that the two schools have worked out in a cooperative relationship.” That means there is no need for students to thumb through the course catalog from the four-year college where they plan to enroll, cross-referencing what classes they’ve taken that look similar to the courses listed.

Schultz adds that another benefit of attending a community college that has an articulation agreement with a four-year college or university, is that community colleges tend to have smaller classes. Students can get used to college and develop some mastery of what they’re studying in a more intimate environment; “Students can be in an introductory level class with 33 students instead of 300.” Then, when students transfer to a four-year



school and they know their major, their upper level coursework will most likely have smaller class sizes.

5. Articulation agreements aren’t just for two-year colleges.

“We actually have an agreement with the University of New Hampshire and Clarkson University in engineering. Students come to us and get all of their foundation coursework in math and sciences and then transfer out,” says Poirier. Poirier says that articulation agreements provide students with “peace of mind.” He says, “It makes for a more seamless transition from an academic point of view.”

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Community College

Community college is gaining attention as lower cost alternative to four-year degree – or a starting point for one.

By Jim Paterson



During the Democratic presidential primaries last spring, probably the only topic discussed more than the big banks and immigration was community college, and the plans to make two years of post-secondary education free. That proposal also was a prominent part of President Obama's last state of the union speech.

Increasingly, community colleges are also promoted by educational planners, counselors, those who are advising students about college – and the people examining the future of education in this country. What super-charged this sector? Wasn't it once the unattractive alternative to a four-year school – and sometimes the place “anyone could go when they couldn't go anywhere else”?

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) suggests there has been a perfect storm of trends that are putting its schools in the spotlight – politics, scary statistics about students with huge debt from expensive four-year schools (but no jobs), the need to more efficiently train workers and a desire by a lot of families who typically haven't valued college to make it a priority.

“Two national conversations have driven the increased attention paid to community colleges,” says Alison Buckley, associate vice president for enrollment services at Howard County Community College in Columbia, MD, a fast-growing region between Baltimore and Washington. “There have been initiatives at both the national and state level regarding the importance of pursuing education beyond high school and there is the growing concern about escalating student loan debt. Parents,

students and economists are all worried.”

Community colleges have also gotten more sophisticated with the options they offer – and with promoting themselves, says Claudia Deschamp, a spokesperson for Houston Community College.

One message that has been particularly successful highlights the ability of community college students to transfer to a four-year school, and that community colleges often offer the same low-level introductory courses much cheaper. In some regions, both the community college and four-year schools have embraced that idea.

For example, in Montgomery County, MD, just outside of Washington, DC, a sophisticated new campus has risen for the Universities at Shady Grove (USG), where about 4000 students are getting the last two years of four-year degrees from about 80 programs, all offered by the state's nine public, four-year schools, from the University of Maryland to Bowie State. The school works closely with Montgomery College, a large nearby successful two-year program, whose students are encouraged to attend USG.

The program melds the advantages of community college into a four-year degree program offered by the institutions that know how to provide it, says Shady Grove recruitment coordinator Jennifer Cohen.

Martha Parham, senior vice president for public relations at AACC, says a growing number of community colleges offer some sort of direct connection to a bachelor's degree, and most make transferring easy. She says nearly 80 percent of

community college students say they intend to earn a four-year-degree.

“There’s also data that says students who transfer from community college do as well or better than students who start at a university,” she says.

Mary Daly, the senior vice president for research at the Federal Reserve in San Francisco, a leading specialist in college finance, says that “onboarding” – or attending a community college for one or two years then transferring – is an excellent economic choice for many students. She also warns that students should study any institution carefully that they might attend.

The money message

Community colleges are also making it clear they are less expensive – whether a student plans to transfer or be trained and get into the work force. Buckley is quick to point out that while tuition and fees for a year are about \$4600 at Howard Community College, University of Maryland and other state schools cost twice as much and nearby private schools often 5-10 times as much per year. AACC says the average cost for community colleges nationwide is about \$3500, with places like California offering a year of community college for about \$1200, while the average cost nationwide at a four-year public college is about \$9000, much higher for private schools.

There is a lot of talk today, also, about college value, and Jonathan Rothwell, a researcher with the Brookings Institute who has studied the issue, says that community colleges can be a bargain.

“There are many colleges with modest or low admission standards that consistently prepare students for high income careers, including community colleges,” he says.

His formula for ranking schools, which includes a variety of data based on the success of its graduates, includes two-year schools such as North Central Institute, ATS Institute of Technology, Lawrence Memorial Hospital School of Nursing, and CUNY Kingsborough Community College. He uses a new Obama administration ranking for his data.

He and Daly both note, however, that every school should be examined carefully by parents and students before students apply, making certain that they offer a strong program and that their graduates

get good paying jobs. Experts have been vocal recently about some two-year schools, especially for-profit institutions that have been overpriced and haven’t delivered on training or education. Daly says those schools may be a large part of the reason students have high debt levels.

The two-year schools also note that they have similar financial aid packages as larger schools and can often fashion packages of assistance to an individual student more readily and be more responsive to students in need because of their small size, according to Denece Huftalin, president of Salt Lake Community College.

“We are a viable option for students interested in a more affordable and flexible college experience,” she says. “Our commitments to access, affordability and responsive, quality curriculum make great sense to students and their families as they face rising college costs, limited time and the need to juggle work, family and education.”

Community connection

The name says it, according to advocates, who note that these schools are a big part of their community.

Community colleges are located and connected to a specific community, and often benefit from public resources near them, or links to businesses who feel a connection. Local officials often take pride in a local community college and feel they have an obligation to support it.

Houston Community College has done research about local labor needs and aligned its curriculum.

“As the fourth largest city in the nation, Houston is home of one of the busiest ports, the largest medical center in the country and considered an international energy capital,” says Deschamp. “Houston’s economy depends on a qualified workforce that can meet the needs of these industries. So, we are allocating considerable resources to prepare the future professionals.”

Nationwide, apart from the Democratic contenders, there has been active support for community colleges and a movement to make them part of the public school system, allowing students wanting to attend a free ride. It’s an idea that has wide approval and will change school counselor’s roles. Funding, however, is a sticking point, experts say.



Variety of options

Increasingly, says Buckley, community colleges often offer a wider range in fields of study each year, particularly in the trades. “We can offer career programs that prepare students for well-paying jobs with an associate degree.”

And, clearly, at Houston Community College, those careers will be connected to the business community’s needs, particularly for tradesmen.

“Technical college options are boundless,” says Nicole Rainey, director of marketing for North Central Kansas Technical College. “From welding to electrical and nursing to carpentry – our students hit the job market with practical, hands-on, high-tech training,” she says. “Not many graduates with four-year degrees can say that.”

And Parham notes that community colleges often serve underrepresented populations, and AACC data supports that. A much larger portion of their student bodies include minorities, older students, students with families and students who are new to this country.

“It has been an incredible journey,” says Josue Rodriguez, student government president who’s in the pre-law program at Houston Community College. “I think that in a community college you find a lot of people like yourself.

You have people who are striving to be great but many times we do not have the resources to apply to an Ivy League school.”

In addition, students who are not ready to leave home, need to help support a family or have other reasons for staying in the area can attend a community college part time or full time. They often have a variety of evening and weekend classes to meet the needs of working students, or those with families. These schools can have a close connection to high schools – and even offer courses for local high school students.

And because they are smaller and have closer ties to the community, they often can provide smaller classes and more personal support, says Rodriguez.

“I have met a lot of people who have gone the extra mile to help me succeed. Here, I received a lot of motivation from people who told me that I could achieve and strive for higher ideals. Sometimes you just need someone to tell you that you can.”

Jim Paterson has written broadly on career exploration, academic success and other education related topics for several national and trade publications. He was a school counselor and was formerly named “Counselor of the Year” in Montgomery County, MD, a large Washington, DC-area district. He is currently a writer for many education publications and websites based in Lewes, DE



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Hacking the Transfer Process

By Grant Greenwood



As a secondary counselor, you have a profound impact on the college decision and selection process for your students. Students depend on the information you provide about particular institutions, specific programs and admissions procedures to develop their unique education and career path. Many times this path is straightforward and executed with relative ease. However, as the economic environment and university admissions evolves, the straightforward path is becoming increasingly rare. Today's student values choices, and there are increasingly more choices to contemplate. As a result, transferring into a desired institution has become more appealing to students. Sometimes a student's academic profile necessitates transferring, other times it is simply the best fit financially and personally for the student. Utilize these tips to help your students hack the transfer process.

Hack 1: Encourage students who intend to transfer to start the relationship and application process early with the receiving institution.

Transfer students tend to have a very different timeline and perspective on the university admissions process. These students are currently enrolled in college courses and their focus is succeeding in college now, where as a high school senior is focused on finding their desired school and gaining admissions. The pressures of college curriculum and the focus necessitated to complete coursework while balancing a working life often delay the application timeline for transferring students. Application season for secondary students begins a year in advance of enrollment. Transfer students many times do not

even consider applying until they are finished with their most recent semester. The admissions process can be convoluted and stressful, and while it can be completed in two months, it's definitely not recommended. Encourage students who intend to transfer to apply at the commencement of their final semester at their current institution. Doing so will enable the student to start a relationship with the receiving institution. As the institution gains more information about the student, the more relevant the information the student receives about the institution becomes. Additionally, many institutions can grant admissions based on an unofficial college transcript. Obviously this varies from institution to institution, but it's not uncommon for a transfer student to gain admissions prior to the completion of their final semester. Admittance is the domino for many other impactful decision making tools such as financial aid and transcript evaluation. Timeliness is especially important in regards to merit and need-based aid. Many institutional grants and scholarships are finite and will be exhausted. The qualified students that get to them first get the aid. Early application and admittance are key to securing available funds and ensuring a smooth transfer.

Hack 2: Shop transcripts and price.

Disclaimer: hack 2 is largely dependent on hack 1. Many students you work with might have a very defined transfer plan; they know where they are looking to end up. There are quite a few students however, who may start at a two year or local state institution with a less focused approach. These students know they want to pursue a bachelor's degree, but they are still uncertain as to where to

pursue that degree. The college selection process for these students should now contain additional influencers, like transfer price and transferable credits. Most institutions have separate and differing merit-based aid models for incoming freshmen and transfer students. In order for a student to make an informed transfer decision, they will need to know their cumulative aid package and expected total cost. These two figures will certainly vary depending on the receiving institution's net price and transfer awards. Calculating yearly costs is a helpful exercise but total cost for a bachelor's degree can't be determined without a transcript evaluation. Unlike incoming freshmen, time to complete a degree for a transfer student is dependent upon how many transferable credits the student receives. For this reason, it is advisable to encourage students to send a college transcript early in the admissions process to determine how many courses will count towards their degree at the receiving institution. Again, transfer policies differ across the nation and just because one institution deems a credit non-transferable doesn't mean another institution will do the same. Intuitively, the less credits that transfer in, the more time it takes to complete a degree and, ultimately, the more expensive that degree is. Since transfer policies vary, shop around!

Bonus Hack: Students can appeal nontransferable credits at most institutions by providing a course description and transcript to the registrar's office.

Hack 3: The transfer admission counselor at the receiving institution should be your best friend.

Admissions Counselors are the gateway to the institution. Since they are the primary contact in the recruiting and admissions process, they are required to know quite a bit about every department on campus. If the receiving institution has a dedicated transfer counselor, they are the go-to for the student and counselor. A great admission counselor will provide immediate feedback and answers for questions concerning transferable credits, cost, scholarships, financial aid, academics, etc. The best can quickly glance at an unofficial transcript and provide expected transfer credits on the spot. Encourage your students to get to know these people—they are an invaluable resource in the transfer process.

Hack 4: Almost every institution has transfer programs and articulation agreements in place. Research them and use them to provide guidance.

Articulation agreements and transfer programs are created with the intention of making the transferring process as simplistic and fluid as possible for students. These agreements form when two institutions collaborate and agree to transferable credits and resource sharing. The range and application of these partnerships are boundless. Research the local institution's partnerships so that you may be able to provide additional value to an advising session with a student who intends to transfer.

Hack 5: Phi Theta Kappa can result in additional scholarship funds.

PTK is the national honor society for two-year institutions. Students with at least twelve completed hours who achieve and maintain a 3.5 GPA are eligible for membership. PTK is an exceptional program that can offer sustained academic support, service opportunities and scholarships. Due to the low hours completed requirement, most students can be up for membership after one semester. Some chapters do require dues or one time fees to participate. From my experience, many students decline to participate in PTK as a result of the small (usually under \$100) up front cost and as a result, unintentionally decline upwards of \$2,500 in transfer scholarships. The fees and dues are always a worthwhile investment. Make sure your students who intend to transfer from a two-year institution are aware of PTK and are willing to participate.

The transfer process doesn't have to be a difficult one if the student is educated on the resources available to them, and on the receiving institution's admission policies. In short, start early, shop around for the best aid package and most favorable transcript evaluation, get to know the dedicated transfer staff, utilize articulation agreements when possible, and enroll in PTK if applicable. Utilize these transfer hacks to ensure your students are positioning themselves now to be in the best possible situation whenever and wherever they decide to continue their education.

Grant Greenwood is the Director of Admission and Recruiting at Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. He received his bachelors of business administration from HSU in 2010 and Master of Business Administration in 2012. Grant has presented and published original research regarding prospective student college choice and social media marketing. He can be reached by email at grant.t.greenwood@hsutx.edu.

Get involved

Do you love helping others? Can't pass up getting involved for a good cause? Even though you may not expect anything in return for your volunteering efforts, there are colleges, companies and organizations that will reward you for your community involvement.

Going beyond high school or college groups

High schools and colleges offer plenty of opportunities to participate in extracurricular activities. But the extracurriculars at school aren't the only ones that count. Consider taking on classes outside of school, like joining a performing arts group or a dance company.

NON-SCHOOL RELATED:

Volunteer

Better yet, if you can volunteer in an area that is related to your intended major. Not only are you giving back to the community but

you also are gaining experience in a subject that is important to you and possibly a future career! For instance, if you plan to study nursing in college, you could volunteer at your local hospital. Or if you want to be a teacher, volunteer in an afterschool program or at a daycare center.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES:

Show commitment

It's important to show continual commitment to at least one activity. Having a list of dozens of extracurricular activities during your senior year of high school isn't as fulfilling as having one or two activities that you have shown a continual commitment to. Plus, many scholarships—both from the institution or private sources—are available for students who participate in certain extracurricular activities! Sure giving back and getting involved in your community feel great! But they have their advantages, too!

Ways to highlight your extracurricular activities to get an edge

- Discuss one of your activities in your admissions essay
- Include a list of activities and highlight leadership positions and accomplishments on your résumé
- If an extracurricular opportunity you are interested in doesn't exist at school, create it yourself.

Excerpted from an article by Elaina Loveland, author of Creative Colleges: A Guide for Student Actors, Artists, Dancers, Musicians.



Apply to college

When it comes to applying for college, your application is a major component to meeting college admissions requirements. Your grades and academic history obviously factor into the equation, but the application itself is what admissions officers see first. Make sure you get it right! Luckily, ensuring your application is everything it should be isn't difficult. Check these 10 things before you submit any college application:

1 Follow directions carefully

One of the most common errors applicants make is simply not following the directions on the application. As you begin filling out your app, be sure that you follow the directions thoroughly.

2 Write legibly

If you don't apply online, the first thing that will be noticed is the way you write. Your application should be neat and readable. We strongly urge you to type your essays and all other documents to prevent any issues arising from your messy handwriting.

3 Reread everything

Be sure to reread everything you wrote carefully. Doing so will ensure that you don't send the

wrong message because of an error or oversight.

4 Check spelling and grammar

Spelling and grammar are very important on your college application. Making errors on things you learned in grade school will give a bad impression.

5 Ensure everything is filled out

Be sure that everything is filled out. You likely won't have to fill out every section of the application, but you do want to ensure that you complete the portions that are pertinent to your acceptance.

6 Fill it out yourself

You can get your parents or friends to help you brainstorm if needed, but fill it out yourself. If you allow someone else to write any portion of the document, it will be apparent to the admissions officers.

7 List extracurricular activities

Be sure that you list extracurricular activities you have actually participated in. Some colleges will verify your activities.

8 Check the date and signature

Don't forget to sign the



application and date it correctly. On some documents, the place for the signature will be on the back—don't forget to look for it!

9 Attach all pertinent information

Ensure that you attach every document the application requires: your ID, admissions essay, and any other documentation to meet the college admission requirements.

10 Ensure your online application gets submitted

If you are applying online, be sure that you reach the confirmation page. Save the confirmation e-mail.



Read more!
Get more tips on how to apply to college at LINKForCounselors.com

Find a career

Some of you have known what you wanted to be when you grow up for years. The rest of you are probably not even sure what your major will be in college — let alone your career! And that's OK. We're here to help. Follow these steps to find the right career and how to get started!

Follow your passion

Career decisions should be in line with your interests — not necessarily with the hottest new career in the field. Consider this: 30 percent of entering freshmen dropout, the average completion of a college degree now takes six years and 64 percent of employees under the age of 25 are unhappy in their jobs.

That's why John Strelecky, author of "The Why Café," says "you have to find a heart connection to a job." Maybe you don't have one area of interest. That's OK, too. Take as many different classes as you can. Backpack around the

world. Take a semester at sea. Try out lots of options and find one that you're most interested in.

YOUR PASSIONS:

Find your fit factor

Finding the right career fit goes beyond passion. You have to consider what you want to be doing and what you are good at, says Jim Beqaj, a recruiting consultant, career coach and author of "How to Hire the Perfect Employer." You have to have the skills to succeed. So try this exercise. If you could create a job for yourself that would leave you challenged but also satisfied, what would it be?

Tie it together

Once you figure out your passion and how that fits into the working world, it's time to work toward that career. Apply to internships and jobs in those fields and at specific companies that need what you're good at. Distinguish yourself from the other applicants by talking about your fit and your passion. Talk about why you're the best candidate strike the right "match" in terms of philosophy, vision and culture.

POSSIBLE CAREERS:



Read more!

Get more tips on how to find a career at LINKForCounselors.com



Attend a college fair

Attending college fairs is a must! You will have dozens of college admission representatives from schools far and wide all gathered in one spot — so don't miss it! And, worse, don't come unprepared.

What's the game plan?

Know what to expect — how is the event structured, what's the dress code like, and even how long the event will run. These seem pretty basic, but you don't want to show up late and dressed inappropriately. Just ask organizers or counselors prior to the event and you'll be ready for the day.

Who's there?

Get a list of schools in attendance before you go to the college fair, and plan your time wisely. Collect as much college information as you can. Better yet, before you go to the fair have a list of hot prospects you want to check out. Pull that list together by doing online research and using our Match tool at NextStepU.com/Match to find schools that fit your criteria!

During the fair

Show your initiative by talking to the college reps at the college fairs; they are often the ones who will review your application. A student who asks great questions

Good questions to ask representatives:

- How would you describe the student body's personality?
- How is this school distinctive?
- How many students transfer to another school during or after their first year?

on college night is an admission rep's dream!

Don't waste time

Do not use the college fair as a time to socialize with neighbors and friends. Use your time wisely. Keep an open mind when at the fair. There will be at least a handful of colleges you've never heard of. Make it a priority to stop by the tables of two or three schools that are not household names. The reputation of a university does not guarantee that it's the best school for you.

Leave with homework

Pick up as much literature as possible from a variety of colleges. Ask for an application, information on specific majors and a financial aid brochure. Before leaving each table and moving on to the next, ask the admissions representative

for a business card. This will provide you with a contact person in the admissions office, someone who might later be able to serve as an advocate for your application.

After the event, sort through all of the information (and goodies!) you picked up throughout the day. Spend a bit more time comparing programs, locations, class size, etc. And getting ready for your next step — the campus tour!

Read more!

Get more tips on what to do at college fairs at LINKForCounselors.com



Decide on your college or university

Use this list of five factors, which are important in the college decision, and also form the acronym REACH: Region, Estimated costs, Academics, Campus life and Housing.

► **Region**

Figure out what type of college you want — big, little or somewhere in between? Consider how you want to spend your spare time. Does the region offer the beach scene, mountain climbing, hiking or ice-skating?

► **Estimated costs**

First of all, can you afford the school? What does the online price calculator tell you? Also, although you will apply for all

the scholarships you can that will award you for your community service and SAT or ACT scores, look beyond your freshman year award potential. Do the colleges you're considering offer scholarships for your major? What are the requirements? Do you qualify for workstudy? Are there other jobs, such as being a tour guide or resident advisor that can help you offset the cost of college?

► **Academics**

Ask your guidance counselor or admissions counselor if the department you're considering majoring in is accredited. Also ask who teaches the courses, what the student-teacher ratio is and the average class size. Remember, not every college is equal, and it is your job to find out which colleges pass your test.

► **Campus life**

One of the best ways to get the feel of a campus is to attend an event. Most colleges offer a preview day of some type to give prospective students a taste of what they offer. Also, consider taking a campus tour. Don't be afraid to ask questions about your tour guide's experiences, what types of student organizations are present on campus

and the main events the campus hosts each year.

► **Housing**

Some colleges require all freshmen to live on campus; others don't. You may want to ask if the university offers any freshmen-only housing. Living on a freshmen floor helps ease anxiety and is a great way to make friends. You will also want to know when the dorms close, what's included in the room cost and if the halls are co-ed.

Lots of people tell you how important this decision is and they throw tons of information at you, but that really doesn't answer the question for you. So, instead, try this checklist as a starting point to narrow down your search. Happy hunting!

Excerpted from "How to pick a college" by Abby Tennant.



Read more!

Get more tips on how to apply to college at

LINKForCounselors.com



Paying for college

There are huge numbers of scholarships, grants and other prizes available to all students. Financial aid and scholarships aren't just for the valedictorian or varsity quarterback.

By following these tips, you can increase your chances of tapping into the billions of dollars available every year to students just like you!

- Step 1** Fill out the FAFSA (www.fafsa.ed.gov)
- Step 2** Research and apply for private scholarships
- Step 3** Supplement with loans if necessary
- Step 4** Repeat steps every year!

All this financial aid jargon have you confused? Here's a vocab lesson:

- **Grants:** A grant is a financial award given to a student for the purposes of paying for all or part of college expenses. A college grant does not have to be repaid by the student.

- **Scholarships:** A financial aid award that does not have to be

Helpful tips as you fill out the FAFSA Application:

- ▶ Read all directions slowly and thoroughly.
- ▶ Note your state and school deadlines for filing financial aid. Apply early, if possible, before you even know if you're accepted to a new school.
- ▶ Estimate your income if you are unsure of the actual amount.
- ▶ Do not use the term 'N/A' or leave a question blank. Both of these responses can slow the filing process.
- ▶ Make sure you sign or e-sign all submitted documents.
- ▶ Keep copies of your financial aid documents for future FAFSA filing.
- ▶ For more information, check out: www.finaid.org/fafsa.

repaid. Scholarships are generally made based on an applicant meeting certain eligibility criteria.



- **Loans:** Financial aid awards that the student or parent borrows from a lender, the school or other third party. Loans must be repaid by the borrower according to the terms of a promissory note, usually with interest.
- **Work-study:** A work-study program allows a student to earn money by working part time during the school year as a component of their financial aid package. These jobs are usually on campus.

Read more!

Get more tips on how to pay for college at LINKForCounselors.com

LINK for Counselors thanks you for the kind words!



“Thank you for the most recent issue of LINK. I added the LINK for the LINK magazine on our school guidance page under Resources for Hoover High School. Our parents will like this magazine.” — *Jason Downey Hoover High School*

“I just received my copy of your magazine. What caught my attention were the topics on the front of the magazine. Thank you for thinking of us counselors!” — *Cynthia Deiner Los Osos High School*

“I just happened to get a copy of LINK Magazine and it's so helpful!” — *Sherrri O'Lonegan, MA, NCC, LPC Air Academy High School*

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“Love the magazine - always find great ideas and great conversation starters!” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

“I do think the articles are useful and I use them to add information to our newsletter for our parents.” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

“I love that you send me a hard copy and I love the size of the book, Easy to carry and read while waiting in the school pick up line and for appointments. Thanks!” *Counselor, Signet Research Study, 11/15*

We love to hear your feedback on how we are doing. Send any comments on how we are doing or what you would like to see to jason@linkforcounselors.com.



The Art Institutes®

THE ART INSTITUTES

Location: National

Website: www.artinstitutes.edu

Year Founded: 1970

Type of Institution: Master's, bachelor's, associate's degrees, as well as certificate and diploma programs.

Student-Faculty Ratio: Varies by location

Institutional Designation: Private/For-Profit

Tuition Costs: Actual tuition and housing costs will vary depending on program, number of credits enrolled, and living arrangements. Prospective students should contact a Student Financial Services professional at the school for details.

Average Student Aid Package: Financial aid is available for those who qualify. Students who require financial assistance should first complete and submit the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) online at www.fafsa.ed.gov and meet with a financial aid officer. Students may also apply for a number of scholarships focusing on their specific areas of career interest.

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: Check out "Scholarships" at artinstitutes.edu to get more info about grants and scholarships for which you may be eligible.

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: Varies by location

At The Art Institutes system of schools, students can choose from bachelor's and associate's degree programs in one of eight competitive areas of study. The experience is challenging, the lessons are hands-on, and the journey leads toward one specific destination: a career in the creative arts.

The Art Institutes is a system of over 50 schools throughout North America. Programs, credential levels, technology, and scheduling options vary by school and are subject to change. Not all online programs are available to residents of all U.S. states. Several institutions included in The Art Institutes system are campuses of South University or Argosy University. Administrative office: The Art Institutes, 210 Sixth Avenue, 33rd Floor, Pittsburgh, PA 15222 © 2015 The Art Institutes. All rights reserved. Our email address is materialsreview@aai.edu.

See aiprgrams.info for program duration, tuition, fees and other costs, median debt, salary data, alumni success, and other important info.

Telephone: 800-894-5793



**BAYLOR
UNIVERSITY**

AVIATION SCIENCES

BAYLOR INSTITUTE FOR AIR SCIENCE

Location: Waco, TX

Website: www.baylor.edu/aviation

Year Founded: 1845

Type of Institution: Baylor University is a private christian university that blends nationally ranked interdisciplinary research with an international reputation for educational excellence.

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1

Tuition Costs: \$21,000

Room & Board: \$6,000

There is only one choice when you are searching for a professional aviation program coupled with a stellar education from a world-class, faith-based university. At Baylor University's Institute for Air Science, we offer you an aviation Bachelor's degree along with opportunities to enjoy a fulfilling college experience and student life on a tradition-rich campus. Soar to new heights and discover Baylor's one-of-a-kind spirit of community and faith!

Telephone: 254-710-3563

Email: bias_office@baylor.edu





Central Arizona College

CENTRAL ARIZONA COLLEGE

Location: 8470 N. Overfield Road, Coolidge, AZ 85128

Website: www.centralaz.edu

Year Founded: 1962

Type of Institution: Community College

Student-Faculty Ratio: 15:1

Institutional Designation: Accredited by Higher Learning Commission

Tuition Costs: \$84 per credit hour for Arizona residents / \$168 per credit hour for out of state residents

Room & Board: www.centralaz.edu/reslife

For more than 45 years, CAC has been serving and educating the diverse communities of Pinal County, AZ. With five campuses and three centers located throughout the county, CAC provides accessible, educational, economic, cultural and personal growth opportunities for all ages. The college offers nearly 150 degrees and certificates, on-line and university transfer courses, career training and personal enrichment classes. An on-campus living environment featuring residence life options is available at the Signal Peak Campus.

Telephone: 800-237-9814



D'Youville COLLEGE

D'YOUVILLE COLLEGE

Location: Buffalo, NY

Website: www.dyc.edu

Year Founded: 1908

Type of Institution: D'Youville is an independent, urban, coeducational institution. It provides health care, business education, liberal arts and professional programs.

Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1

Tuition Costs: \$23,900

Room & Board: \$11,180

Average Student Aid Package: \$20,124

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 82%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$8,801

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,500

D'Youville's programs cover everything from health care to business education with a strong liberal arts core in the curriculum. The success of D'Youville's programs is reflected in the high placement rate of graduates being employed or continuing in advanced studies. This reflects an excellent return on investment. D'Youville remains focused on meeting the demands of the professional job market and the needs of students. It offers a competitive tuition and lives up to its motto, "Educating for Life."

Telephone: 800-777-3921

Email: admissions@dyc.edu





ERSKINE COLLEGE

Location: Due West, SC

Website: visit.erskine.edu

Year Founded: 1839

Type of Institution: Private, Christian, 4-year, liberal arts college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 12:1

Tuition Costs: \$32,540

Room & Board: \$10,900

Average Student Aid Package: \$37,560 (SC)

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: >95%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$22,570

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,500

Forbes ranks Erskine College #1 among Christian colleges in South Carolina and #1 among NCAA Div. 2 schools in the Southeast (Forbes 2015 America's Top Colleges). As the first Christian college in the state, Erskine has provided excellent education in a nurturing atmosphere for over 175 years. Erskine's small size and rich tradition of scholarship create an ideal atmosphere for students who desire close working relationships with faculty. The results of this intensely relational approach are demonstrated by Erskine's exceptional rates of acceptance and completion in both research and professional graduate programs, with several programs achieving near 100% placement.

Telephone: 864-379-8838

Email: admissions@erskine.edu



Believe in the possibilities.

GANNON UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA

Website: www.gannon.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Institutional Designation: Private - Catholic (Diocesan)

Tuition Costs: \$29,300-\$31,070

Room & Board: \$10,520-\$13,890

Average Student Aid Package: \$20,989

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$17,030

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,300

Gannon University in downtown Erie, Pennsylvania, is a caring community of dynamic faculty and staff who educate motivated students in an environment inspired by Catholic values. Enrollment at Gannon exceeds 4,400 students, and personal attention for each student is provided with a student-to-faculty ratio of 14:1. U.S. News & World Report's "America's Best Colleges" continues to cite Gannon as a top tier university in the northern region of the United States. Additionally, Gannon has been ranked in the annual guide's Great Schools, Great Prices category, which affirms Gannon's mission of providing a quality education at an affordable price.

Telephone: 814-871-7407

Email: admissions@gannon.edu



HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

HAMPTON UNIVERSITY

Location: Hampton, VA

Website: www.hamptonu.edu

Year Founded: 1868

Type of Institution: Private

Student-Faculty Ratio: 10:1

Institutional Designation: Hampton University, coeducational

Tuition Costs: \$20,526

Room & Board: \$10,176

Average Student Aid Package: \$5,632

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 35%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,050

At Hampton University “Inspiration to Impact” are more than words. We offer a rich academic environment that cultivates leaders. Through global scientific collaborations and modern research projects, our professors and students are asking questions and finding answers. We offer our students innovative courses that lead to 48 bachelor’s; 24 master’s programs; and doctoral or professional degrees in nursing, physics, atmospheric/planetary sciences, business leadership and administration, educational leadership and management, physical therapy, and pharmacy.

Telephone: 757-727-5000

Email: admissioncounselor@hamptonu.edu



HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY®

prideandpurpose

HOFSTRA UNIVERSITY

Location: Hempstead, NY

Website: hofstra.edu

Year Founded: 1935

Type of Institution: University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Institutional Designation: Private, Non-profit

Tuition Costs: \$42,160

Room & Board: \$16,280

Average Student Aid Package: \$25,487

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 61%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$15,009

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,005

Hofstra University offers students the complete college experience — a vibrant, active campus with hundreds of cultural and social events annually, small classes with experienced faculty, access to state-of-the-art technology and facilities — all less than an hour away from downtown New York.

Telephone: 516-463-6700

Email: admission@hofstra.edu





LYCOMING COLLEGE

Location: Williamsport, PA
Website: www.lycoming.edu
Year Founded: 1812

Type of Institution: A private, residential, four-year liberal arts undergraduate institution

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Tuition Costs: \$36,432 (year)

Room & Board: \$5,552 (room/year); \$5,824 (board/year)

Average Student Aid Package: 100% of students get aid

At Lycoming College, our network of nearly 15,000 alumni find success across all industries. They include dozens of executives at Fortune 500 companies and public servants at all levels of national and international government. They win Pulitzers, Oscars and Emmys. They get accepted to nationally ranked graduate programs such as Harvard Medical School and the University of Pennsylvania. What's more, they come back to network, metro counsel and help the next generation of students find their careers and pursue higher degrees.

One of the nation's 50 oldest and most respected liberal arts colleges, Lycoming College enrolls 1,300 students from 30 states and 15 countries. Join a community of active learners and renowned scholars in class sizes of 18 or less. Work with professors to craft customized, market-driven majors, minors and concentrations across our 36 academic programs. Compete in one of 17 NCAA Division III sports. Study abroad in more than a dozen countries. Put the liberal arts to work at Lycoming College.

Telephone: 1-800-345-3920 or 570-321-4026
Email: admissions@lycoming.edu



LYNN UNIVERSITY

Location: Boca Raton, Florida
Website: www.lynn.edu

Year Founded: 1962

Type of Institution: Lynn University is an Independent, nonprofit, coeducational, residential institution.

Student-Faculty Ratio: 18:1

Tuition Costs: \$34,400

Room & Board: \$11,640

Lynn University is an independent college based in Boca Raton, Florida, with approximately 3,000 students from 100 countries. U.S. News and World Report ranks Lynn among the top three most innovative and international schools in the region. Lynn's Dialogues curriculum and award-winning iPad program help graduates gain the intellectual flexibility and global experience to fulfill their potential in an ever changing world.

Telephone: 561-237-7900
Email: admission@lynn.edu





MARSHALL UNIVERSITY

Location: Huntington, WV

Website: www.marshall.edu

Year Founded: 1837

Type of Institution: Public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Institutional Designation: Master's Large

Tuition Costs: \$7,154 WV resident; \$16,382 non-resident

Room & Board: \$10,126

Average Student Aid Package: \$11,163

Marshall University is a mid-sized, public institution with multiple campuses and educational centers in West Virginia. Founded in 1837 and named in honor of the 4th Chief Justice John Marshall, the university is headquartered on a 100-acre campus in the heart of Huntington, WV, the second-largest city in the state. Students find that Marshall combines the best of the opportunities of a large institution with the personal care and attention expected with a school of a much smaller size.

Telephone: 1-877-goherd1

Email: recruitment@marshall.edu



MERCYHURST UNIVERSITY

Location: Erie, PA

Website: www.mercyhurst.edu

Year Founded: 1926

Type of Institution: 4-year, Catholic, liberal arts

Student-Faculty Ratio: 14:1

Tuition Costs: \$32,430

Room & Board: \$11,000-\$13,000 (depending on residence hall)

Average Student Aid Package: \$20,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: More than 90% of students receive financial aid

Mercyhurst University, founded in 1926 by the Sisters of Mercy, is a fully accredited, four-year, Catholic comprehensive institution, in Erie, Pa. The university offers more than 100 majors, minors and concentrations as well as unique post-baccalaureate, advanced certificate and master's degree programs. In addition, Mercyhurst provides certificate and associate degree offerings at branch campuses in North East, Corry and the Booker T. Washington Center. Inspired by our motto, "Carpe Diem" (seize the day), our faculty and students are busy making a difference on and off campus — from "the Hill" to the far corners of the world.

Telephone: 800-825-1926 x2202





MIDWESTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

Location: Wichita Falls, TX

Website: www.mwsu.edu

Year Founded: 1922

Type of Institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Institutional Designation: Public, State

Tuition Costs: \$4,002 (in-state); \$4,977 (non-resident) per semester

Room & Board: \$3,535-4,050 per semester depending on hall

Average Student Aid Package: \$10,933

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 67%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,805

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,681

Midwestern State is recognized as a public liberal arts university with strong programs in the arts, humanities, sciences, and social sciences as well as accredited professional programs in mechanical engineering, social work, nursing, radiologic science, respiratory care, athletic training, and business, among others. MSU offers the individual attention of a private education but the affordability of a public university. Classes average fewer than 30 students, and most are taught by fulltime faculty, not graduate assistants. Students are active in more than 100 organizations and bring a spirit of competition to 13 NCAA Division II athletic programs.

Telephone: 800-842-1922

Email: admissions@mwsu.edu



NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

Location: In historic Lewiston, New York, four minutes from Niagara Falls, 20 minutes from Buffalo and 90 minutes from Toronto

Website: www.niagara.edu

Year Founded: 1856

Type of Institution: private, four-year, comprehensive, Catholic, co-educational university

Student-Faculty Ratio: 13:1

Institutional Designation: Private, religious (Vincentian), Masters Large

Tuition Costs: \$29,500

Room & Board: \$12,700

Average Student Aid Package: \$27,232

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 86%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$22,618

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,705

Founded in 1856, Niagara University is a comprehensive institution, blending the best of a liberal arts and professional education, grounded in a values-based Catholic tradition. Its colleges of Arts and Sciences, Business Administration, Education, and Hospitality and Tourism Management offer programs at the baccalaureate, master's and doctoral level.

As the first Vincentian university established in the United States, Niagara prepares students for personal and professional success while emphasizing service to the community.

Telephone: 800-462-2111 or 716-286-8715

Email: admissions@niagara.edu





THE OCEAN CORPORATION

Location: Houston, Texas

Website: www.oceancorp.com

Year Founded: 1969

Type of Institution: Vocational/Trade School

Student-Faculty Ratio: 30:1

Institutional Designation: Single Campus/Full Academic Year/Proprietary

Tuition Costs: \$21,000

Room & Board: No on-campus housing and meal plans available

Average Student Aid Package: \$15,541

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 78%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$4,862

The Ocean Corporation has trained men and women for exciting new careers since 1969. Students train at The Ocean Corporation to become commercial divers and industrial NDT inspectors. We have been in the business for over 40 years and we know the “nuts and bolts” of both industries. Our hands-on training takes less than 8 months to complete and will give you the competitive edge you need to succeed.

Telephone: 800-321-0298

Email: admissions@oceancorp.com



PENNSYLVANIA COLLEGE OF TECHNOLOGY

Location: Williamsport, PA

Website: www.pct.edu/link

Year Founded: 1914

Type of Institution: 4-year college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17.6 to 1

Institutional Designation: Public

Tuition Costs: \$16,080 (PA); \$22,890 (out-of-state)

Room & Board: \$10,412 (depending on housing and meal plan selected)

Pennsylvania College of Technology, a special mission affiliate of Penn State, is a national leader in applied technology education. Penn College offers more than 100 bachelor, associate, and certificate majors to nearly 5,600 students in careers ranging from manufacturing, design, transportation, and construction to hospitality, health, business, and natural resources. Business/industry connections, small classes, industry-standard equipment, and faculty with work experience contribute to strong graduate placement rates. The full college experience awaits those desiring on-campus housing, Greek Life, student organizations, and NCAA Division III athletics.

Telephone: 800-367-9222

Email: pctInfo@pct.edu





REGENT UNIVERSITY

Location: Virginia Beach, VA

Website: www.regent.edu

Year Founded: 1977

Type of Institution: Private, Liberal Arts, Christian
Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Tuition Costs: On Campus: \$15,900/year (24-36 credits/yr.); Evening/Online: \$395 per credit hour

Room & Board: Room: \$2,150 - \$5,785 per semester; Board: \$2,520 avg.)

Average Student Aid Package: \$11,889

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$6,709

Regent University prepares students with the knowledge to excel and the faith to live with purpose. Our 20,000+ alumni, from more than 110 countries, are changing the world as accomplished professionals. Named a top-20 school nationally for online bachelor's programs (*U.S. News & World Report*, 2016), Regent is among the most affordable undergraduate Christian colleges (CCU 2016). Fully accredited, challenging programs are available online and on campus. New classes begin every eight weeks.

Telephone: 866.910.7615

Email: admissions@regent.edu



SALISBURY UNIVERSITY

Location: Salisbury, MD

Website: www.salisbury.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: 4-year, public comprehensive
Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Institutional Designation: A Maryland University of National Distinction

Tuition Costs: \$8,128 in-state; \$16,474 out of state

Room & Board: \$10,240 (based on "all day, every day" meals and double occupancy renovated dorm)

Average Student Aid Package: \$7,143 (need-based)

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 52.4% (need-based)

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$2,514 (non-need-based), \$5,644 (need-based)

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$1,888

Nationally recognized for academic excellence, Salisbury University is a proud member of the University System of Maryland offering 42 undergraduate majors, 14 graduate programs and 2 doctorates in nursing practice and education. SU is ranked among the nation's "Best Value" colleges by Kiplinger's Personal Finance, Money, Forbes and The Princeton Review and U.S. News & World Report. Washington Monthly also named SU among America's "Best Bang For The Buck" Colleges. Sea Gull athletes have earned 19 NCAA Division III national team championships. Founded in 1925, SU is just 2.5 hours from Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Telephone: 410-543-6161

Email: admissions@salisbury.edu





TEXAS A&M KINGSVILLE

Location: Kingsville, TX

Website: www.tamuk.edu

Year Founded: 1925

Type of Institution: Public

Student-Faculty Ratio: 20:1

Institutional Designation: Four-year

Tuition Costs: \$7,700 per year (in-state for 15 semester credit hours)

Room & Board: \$5,051 per semester, \$10,102 per year

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,874

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 78%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$5,154

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,819

Texas A&M University-Kingsville is the fastest growing public doctoral university in the nation. Degree offerings include well-known programs in engineering, agriculture and music, and new programs in veterinary technology and criminal justice. Classroom learning is enhanced through hands-on research opportunities at both the undergraduate and graduate level. Recognized for excellence in affordability, financial aid, athletics and more, Texas A&M-Kingsville offers a complete college experience.

Telephone: 361-593-2111

Email: admissions@tamuk.edu



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TOURO COLLEGE, NEW YORK SCHOOL OF CAREER AND APPLIED STUDIES (NYSCAS)

Location: NYC

Website: nyscas.touro.edu

Year Founded: 1971

Type of Institution: Comprehensive higher education system

Student-Faculty Ratio: 19:1

Tuition Costs: \$14,600

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,000

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 90%

NYSCAS is ideally suited to reflect, and respond to, the challenges of this new era. Our tradition of academic excellence has given us the foundation and confidence to reach for new and unimaginable knowledge, while the diversity of our University system community makes it possible for students, faculty, alumni, and neighbors to interact with — and thus be transformed by — the multiplicity of human perspectives. At the same time, our numerous locations in the world's most global city offers us a unique laboratory in which to study the evolution of modern society, attract and learn from the remarkable people who make New York home and, in doing so, fulfill our responsibilities as active, engaged citizens.

Telephone: 212 463-0400 ext.5500

Email: admissions.nyscas@touro.edu





UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON-VICTORIA

Location: Victoria, Texas

Website: www.uhv.edu

Year Founded: 1973

Type of Institution: 4-year public, university

Student-Faculty Ratio: 17:1

Institutional Designation: Bachelor's and master's

Tuition Costs: \$7,115 (full-time, in-state, undergraduate)

Room & Board: \$7,662

Average Student Aid Package: \$9,952

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 60%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$4,068

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$2,065

The University of Houston-Victoria offers courses leading to 70 bachelor's and master's degree programs and concentrations in the schools of Arts & Sciences; Business Administration; and Education, Health Professions & Human Development. UHV provides face-to-face classes at its Victoria, Texas, campus as well as a teaching site in Katy, Texas, and online classes that students can take from anywhere. Since its founding in 1973, UHV has provided students with a quality education from excellent faculty at an affordable price.

Telephone: 877-970-4848

Email: recruitment@uhv.edu



UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST

Location: 1409 Walnut Grove Avenue, Rosemead, CA 91770

Website: www.uwest.edu

Year Founded: 1991

Type of Institution: 4 year private

Student-Faculty Ratio: 10:1

Institutional Designation: WASC accredited

Tuition Costs: \$\$5,256/semester

Room & Board: \$3,069/semester

Average Student Aid Package: \$8,857

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$7,740

Average Work-Study Aid Awarded: \$3,300

University of the West offers programs in Business, English, Psychology, Liberal Arts, and Religious Studies. Our experienced and committed faculty and staff provide personalized attention for students to succeed in and out of the classroom. With a community representing more than 40 countries, UWest fully embraces a diverse array of cultures and perspectives. In addition, UWest dedicates efforts to provide accessible education by offering a selection of private scholarships of up to \$10,000.

Telephone: (626)571-8811

Email: admission@uwest.edu



UTICA

COLLEGE

UTICA COLLEGE

Location: Utica, NY

Website: www.utica.edu

Year Founded: 1946

Type of Institution: 4-year, private, residential college

Student-Faculty Ratio: 11:1

Tuition Costs: \$19,996

Room & Board: \$10,434

Utica College is seizing the initiative among America's colleges and universities in addressing affordability. Starting in Fall 2016, Utica is resetting its tuition to under \$20,000 per year, and that's before scholarships and financial aid. Specializing in professional education with a strong foundation in the liberal arts, UC offers innovative, career-driven programs in 16 of the 20 most desired majors and an 11:1 student to faculty ratio. An excellent educational value just got better.

Telephone: 800-782-8884

Email: admiss@utica.edu



VIRGINIA TECH CORPS OF CADETS

Location: Blacksburg, Virginia

Website: www.vtcc.vt.edu

Year Founded: 1872

Type of Institution: 4-year Land Grant Research University

Student-Faculty Ratio: 16:1

Tuition Costs: In-state: \$12,852 Out-of-state: \$29,975

Room & Board: \$8,564

Average Student Aid Package: \$16,745

Average Percentage of Financial Need Met: 62%

Average Scholarship/Grant Aid Awarded: \$8,413

The Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets has produced military, public, and corporate leaders since the university was founded in 1872. It is one of just two military corps within a large public university. The Corps holds its members to the highest standards of loyalty, honor, integrity, and self-discipline. Virginia Tech, the most comprehensive university in Virginia, is dedicated to quality, innovation, and results to the commonwealth, the nation, and the world.

Telephone: 540 231-6858

Email: corpsofcadets@vt.edu



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A Niagara University education delivers a **coveted 21st-century degree**. Taught by faculty who are **mentors for the mind and heart**, students realize their fullest potential. Our students go **beyond the ridge**, igniting positive change in the lives of others in our community and around the world. And Niagara graduates are **world-ready global citizens** who do well for themselves and others.

Purple Pride is a state of mind. Our Vincentian heritage calls us to strive for excellence and humility — and it's evident in the way we celebrate and take pride in everything and everyone at Niagara University.

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